

POEMS AND DISCOURSES

Occasionally Written

By *John Norris*, Fellow of *All-Souls-Colledge* in *Oxford*.

——— *Nec vos dulcissima Mundi
Nomina, vos Musa, libertas, otia, libri,
Vos Horti Sylveque a nima remanente relinquam.*

L O N D O N,
Printed by *J. Harefinch*, for *James Norris*, at
the *Kings-Arms* without *Temple-Bar*.
MDCLXXXIV.

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AND
DISCOURSES

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By John Newton, Fellow of All
Saints College in Oxford.

Printed by J. Sturges, for J. & W. Smith, in Strand, London.

LONDON
Printed by J. Sturges, for J. & W. Smith, in Strand, London.
the Right-honourable William Pitt, Esq.
MDCCLXXV.

To the excellently accomplish'd
Lady, Madam *Anne Strick-*
land, Daughter to the Honou-
rable Sir *Thomas Strickland*, of
Boynnton in *York-shire*, Baronet.

MADAM,

I Could have satisfy'd my self
with the humble Content of
a lower Patronage, were I not
more ambitious of giving some Te-
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I owe You, than of deriving Ho-
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of your Protection.

But tho Ambition be not my di-
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By John Mearns, Fellow of All
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The Author's Address is
at the College of All Saints,
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The Epistle Dedicatory.

excellency of your Personal Accomplishments will render it suspicious that in this Dedication I rather intend Honour to my self, than Service to You, so that my Devotion will appear doubtful and obscure, and my Incense, in too literal a sense, ascend in a Cloud.

But, Madam, let not the happy necessity which I lye under of advantaging my own Credit while I serve you, prejudice the sincerity of my Intentions, or make my officiousness to be thought Mercenary. 'Tis the constant Fate of all the Votaries of Greatness to be engaged in such a Necessity, and it happens to be so as well in Religion

The Epistle Dedicatory.

ligion as in Civil Address. Thus the Altar, which is intended merely for an Instrument of Devotion and Religious Service, is it self made awful and Sacred by the Inscription which it wears, and becomes honourable by the Livery of Heaven.

Madam, I wish you could find as many things in this Oblation which would deserve your Patronage, as you will that will need it. However, I hope your goodness will pardon what your Judgment cannot approve. Here is one Composition which has had the Fortune to please so well, that tis encouraged to make a second Appear-

The Epistle Dedicatory.

ance upon the Stage. Whether the rest are born under the same lucky Planet I know not; but your acceptance (Madam) will calculate their Nativity, for thence I shall take the measures of my Success. I value your single approbation more than the Applause of a Theatre, but if I miss of both, yet I hope you will give me leave to promise my self a Pardon for the Presumption of this Address, and to assume to my self the Honourable Title of

(Madam)

Your most humble

and devoted Servant

J. N.

*The Passion of our B. Saviour re-
presented in a Pindarique Ode.*

*Quis talia fando
Temperet a Lacrymis ?*

I.

SAY bold Licentious Muse,
What Noble Subject wilt thou chuse,
Of what great Hero, of what mighty thing,
Wilt thou in boundless numbers sing ?
Sing the unfathom'd Depths of Love,
(For who the Wonders done by Love can tell,
By Love, which is it self all Miracle ?)
Here in vast endless Circles may'st thou rove,
And like the travelling Planet of the day
In an Orb unbounded stray.
Sing the great Miracle of Love Divine,
Great be thy Genius, sparkling every Line,
Love's greatest Mystery rehearse,
Greater then that
Which on the teeming Chaos brooding sat,
And hatch'd, with kindly heat, the Universe.
How God in Mercy chose to bleed, and dye
To rescue Man from Misery,
Man, not his Creature only, but his Enemy.

II.

Lo, in *Gethsemane*, I see him prostrate lye,
 Press'd with the weight of his great Agony.

The *common* Sluces of the Eyes
 To vent his mighty Passion won't suffice,
 His tortured Body weeps *all-o're*,
 And out of every Pore

Buds forth a *pretious* Gem of Purple Gore.

How strange the Power of afflictions rod

When in the Hand of an incensed God!

Like the *commanding* Wand
 In *Moses* Hand

It works a Miracle, and turns the *Flood*
 Of *Tears* into a *Sea* of *Blood*.

See with what *Pomp* Sorrow does now appear!

How *prond* She is of being seated here!

She never wore

So *rich* a *Dye* before.

Long was he willing to decline

Th' *Encounter* of the *Wrath* *Divine*.

Thrice he sent for his Release

Pathetic *Embassies* of *Peace*,

At length his *Courage* overcame his *Doubt*,

Resolv'd he was, and so the *bloody* *Flagg* hung out.

III.

And now the *Tragic* *Scenes* displaid,

Where drawn in full *Battalia* are laid

Before his Eyes

That numerous *Host* of *Miseries*

He

He must withstand, that *Map* of Woe
Which he must undergo.

That heavy *Wine-press* which must by him be trod,
The whole *Artillery* of God.

He saw that Face whose very Sight
Chears Angels with its *Beatific* Light,
Contracted now into a dreadful frown,

All *cloath'd* with Thunder, *big* with death
And Showers of hot burning Wrath,
Which shortly must be poured down.

He saw a black and dismal Scroll
Of Sins past, present, and to come,
With their intolerable Doom

Which would the more oppress his *spotless* Soul ;

As th' Elements are weighty proved

When from their *Native* Station they'r removed.

He saw the foul *Ingratitude* of those

Who would the *Labours* of his Love oppose,

And reap no benefit by all his *Agonys*.

He saw all this,

And as he saw to *Waver* he began,

And almost to *repent* of his great Love for Man.

IV.

When lo, a heavenly Form all bright and fair,
Swifter then *Thought* shot through th' *enlight'ned* Air.

He who sat next th' *imperial* Throne,

And read the Councils of the Great *Three-One*,

Who in Eternity's *Mysterious* Glass

Saw both what was, what is, and what must come to

He

He came with Reverence profound,
 And rais'd his *prostrate Maker* from the Ground;
 Wiped off the bloody Sweat
 With which his *Face* and *Garments* too were wet,
 And comforted his dark *benighted* Mind
 With sovereign Cordials of *Light* refin'd.
 This done, in soft addresles he began
 To fortifie his kind Designs for Man,
 Unseal'd to him the Book of Gods Decree:
 And shew'd him what *must* be,
 Alledg'd the Truth of *Prophecies*,
Types, *Figures*, and *Mysteries*,
 How needful it was to supply
 With humane Race the ruins of the Skie.
 How this would *new accession* bring
 To the *Celestial Quire*,
 And how withall it would inspire
 New Matter for the Praise of the great King.
 How he should see the *travail* of his *Soul*, and bless
 Those Sufferings which had so good Success.
 How great the *Triumphs* of his Victory,
 How glorious his *Ascent* would be,
 What *weighty* Bliss in Heaven he should obtain
 By a few Hours of Pain,
 Where to *Eternal* Ages he should Reign.
 He spake, confirm'd in mind the *Champion* stood,
 A Spirit divine
 Through the thick *Veil* of *Flesh* did shine,
 All over *Powerful* he was, all over *Good*.

Pleas'd

Pleas'd with his successful Flight,
 The *Officious* Angel posts away
 To the bright Regions of Eternal Day,
 Departing in a *track of Light*.
 In haste for News the heavenly People ran,
 And joy'd to hear the *hopeful* State of Man.

V.

And now that strange prodigious hour,
 When God must subject be to humane Power,
 That Hour is come,
 The *unerring Clock* of Fate has struck,
 'Twas heard below down to Hell's *lowest Room*,
 And strait th' Infernal Powers th' *appointed signal*
 Open the *Scene* my Muse, and see (took
Wonders of Impudence and Villany ;
 How wicked *Mercenary* hands
 Dare to *invade* him whom they should *adore*,
 With Swords & Staves incompas'd round he stands,
 Who knew no other *Guards* but those of Heaven
 Once with his *powerful* breath he did repell (before.
 The rude assaults of Hell.

A ray of his *Divinity*
 Shot forth with that bold Answer, *I am He*,
 They reel and stagger, and fall to the Ground,
 For God was in the Sound.
 The Voice of God was once again
Walking in the Garden heard,
 And once again was by the *guilty* Hearers fear'd ;
 Trembling seiz'd every joynt, and chilness every
 (Vein.
 This

This *little* Victory he won,
 Shew'd what he *could* have done,
 But he to whom as *chief* was given
 The whole *Militia* of Heaven,
 That *Mighty* He
 Declines *all* Guards for his defence
 But that of his *inseparable* Incocence;
 And *quietly* gives up his Liberty.
 He's seiz'd on by the *Military* bands,
 With *Cords* they bind his *sacred* hands,
 But ah! how *weak*, what *nothings* would they prove,
 Were he not held by *stronger* ones of Love.

VI.

Once more, my weary'd Muse, thy Pinions try,
 And *reach* the top of *Calvary*.
 A *steep Ascent* : But most to him who bore
 The *Burthen* of a *Cross* this way before.
 (The *Cross ascends*, there's something in it sure
 That *Moral* is and *mystical*,
 No *Heights* of Fortune are from thee secure,
 Afflictions sometimes *Climb*, as well as *fall*)
 Here breath a while, and view
 The dolefull'st *Picture* Sorrow ever drew,
 The *Lord of Life*, Heavens *darling* Son,
 The Great, th' Almighty one,
 With *out-stretch'd* Arms, nail'd to a *curst* Tree,
 Crown'd with sharp *Thorns*, cover'd with *Infamy* ;

He

He who before
 So many *Miracles* had done,
 The *Lives* of *others* to restore,
 Does with a *greater*, lose his *own*.
 Full three long hours his *tender* body did sustain
 Most exquisite and *poignant* pain.
 So long the *Sympathizing* Sun his light *withdrew*,
 And wonder'd how the *Stars* their *dying* Lord could

VII.

This strange defect of light
 Does all the *Sages* in *Astronomy* affright
 With fears of an *Eternal* Night.
 Th' *Intelligences* in their *Courses* stray,
 And *Travellers* below *mistake* their way,
 Wond'ring to be *benighted* in the midst of *Day*.
 Each mind is seiz'd with *Horror* and *Despair*,
 And more o're-spread with *darkness* than the *air*.
 Fear on, 'tis *wondrous* all and *new*,
 'Tis what past *Ages* never knew.
 Fear on, but yet you'll find
 The *great Eclipse* is still behind.
 The *lustre* of the face *Divine*
 Does on the *Mighty Sufferer* no longer *shine*.
 God hides his *Glories* from his sight
 With a thick *Screen* made of *Hell's* *grossest* night.
 Close-wrought it was, and *Solid* all,
 Compacted and *Substantial*,
 Impenetrable to the *Beatifick* light
 Without *Complaint* he bore
 The tortures he endur'd before;

But

But *now* no longer able to *contain*
 Under the great *Hyperbole* of pain,
 He *mourns*, and with a strong *Pathetick* cry,
 Laments the sad *Desertion* of the *Diety*.

Here stop my *Muse*, stop and admire;
 The *Breather* of all *Life* does now *expire* ;
 His *Milder* Father *Summons* him away,
 His *Breath* *obediently* he does *resign* ;
 Angels to *Paradice* his *Soul* convey,
 And *Calm* the *Relicts* of his grief with *Hymns* divine.

Anno-

Annotations.

THis Ode (if I mistake not) carries all throughout the true *Genius* and Spirit of *Pindarique* Poetry; which is the highest and most magnificent kind of writing in Verse, and consequently fit only for great and noble Subjects, such as are as *boundless* as its *own Numbers*: The nature of which is to be loose and free, and not to keep one settled pace, but sometimes like a gentle stream to glide along peaceably within its own Channel, and sometimes, like an impetuous Torrent, to *roul* on extravagantly, and carry all before it. Agreeable to that description of *Horace*:

*Nunc pace delabentis Hetruscum
In mare, nunc lapides adestos
Stirpesque raptas & pecus & domos
Volventis una non sine montium,
Clamore vincinaque Sylva.*

And this may serve to explain the Introduction of the Poem:

And

And hatch'd with kindly heat the Universe.

Love in the *Gentile Theology*, is made the most ancient of the Gods, and the Sire of all things. *Ἰνα πάντα δι' ἐκείνου μετὰ ἀφ' ἡρώτων*, says *Plutarch*. And it is described by *Simmius Rhodius*, in a pair of Wings, which suited well with the *Symbolical* representation of the *Chaos* by an Egg, which was brooded and hatch'd under these Wings of Love. This whole matter is rarely well, and at large express'd by *Aristophanes* in *Avibus*. The plain and *undisguised* meaning of it is this, That the Creation of the World was the effect of the Divine Love, God having no other end in it besides the *Communication* of his own *Happiness*.

*As th' Elements are weighty proved,
When from their Native Station they're removed.*

This is according to the *Aristotelean Hypothesis*, that the Elements are not heavy in their own places, which whether it be true or no, I shall not now dispute. However, it serves for an *Illustration*, which is sufficient for my present purpose.

He

He saw the foul Ingratitude of those, &c.

The bitter Ingredients of our Lord's Cup mention'd hitherto, were taken from things relating to his own *personal* concern. But this last motive of his Sorrow proceeds wholly on the behalf of *others*, of whose final impenitence he is suppos'd to have a foresight. This I take to be a good and proper insinuation of the excellency of our Blessed Lord's temper, his exceeding great Love and *Philanthropy*, when among the other Ingredients of his Passion this is supposed to be one, that there would be some, who, by their own default, would receive no benefit from it.

Unseal'd to him the Book of God's decree, &c.

Whether the Angel used these *topicks* of Consolation or no, is a thing as indifferent to my purpose, as 'tis *uncertain*. In the Scripture it is only said in general, that *there appear'd an Angel from Heaven strengthening him*. However, these Arguments are such as are probable and pertinent, and that's sufficient.

*In haste for news the heavenly people ran,
And joy'd to hear the hopeful state of man.*

It is highly reasonable to believe that those blessed and excellent Spirits, who out of their compassionate love and concern for mankind, usher'd in the news of our Saviour's Nativity with *Anthems of Praise and Thanksgiving*; and are said likewise to rejoice at the Conversion of a Sinner, were also mightily transported with joy, when they understood that our Saviour, notwithstanding the *reluctancy* of innocent Nature, was at length fully resolv'd to undertake the *Price* of our Redemption.

*Full three long hours his Tender Body did
sustain
Most exquisite and poignant pain.*

It is supposed by the Ancient Fathers, that the Sufferings which our B. Saviour underwent in his Body, were more afflictive to him than the same would have been to another man, upon the account of the excellency and quickness of his sense of feeling: And this opinion I take to be as *reasonable*, as 'tis *pious*. For since, according to the Principles of Philosophy, the sense of feeling arises from

from the proportion of the first Qualities, it follows, that the better the complexion or temperament of any man is, the better his Feeling must needs be. Now 'tis very reasonable to believe, that that man who was to be substantially united to the *God-head*, and who was begotten by the miraculous *overshadowings* of the holy Spirit, should have a Body endow'd with the best Complexion, and most noble *Harmony* of Qualities that could be, that so it might be a suitable Organ for his excellent Soul. And if so, then it follows that the flesh of our Lord's Body was so soft and tender, and his feeling so exquisitely quick and sensible, as never any man's was before: And consequently the severe usages which he underwent, not only at his *Passion*, but throughout his *whole* Life, must needs be in a *Singular* manner afflictive to him. And hence appears the vanity of their opinion, who are little or nothing affected with the consideration of our Lord's *Passion*, because they think it was made light to him, by reason of his union with the *God-head*. 'Twas easie for him (some inconsiderate Persons are ready to say) to suffer this or this, for he was God, and not meer man, as we are. True, he was so,

but his being God did no way lessen the punishment he underwent as *man*, but only supported him in his *existence* under it, in the same manner as God is supposed, by an act of his Almighty Power, to preserve the bodies of the *Damn'd*, *incorruptible* among the *everlasting burnings*. But this I think is no *kindness* to them. Neither did the Society of the Divine Nature any more diminish the Sufferings of our dearest Lord ; nay, in one respect it proved an *accidental aggravation* to them , because upon the account of this Noble Union he had given him a Body of a most admirable Complexion and Harmonious Temperature, and consequently of a Flesh exceeding tender, and most exquisitely perceptive of the least impressions.

So long the Sympathizing Sun his light withdrew,

And wonder'd how the Stars their dying Lord could view.

The *Eclipse* which accompany'd the Passion of our Saviour was so remarkable and miraculous, that 'twas taken notice of by many of the *Gentile* Historians : And moreover, *Dionysius Areopagita*, then a Professor of Philosophy at *Heliopolis* in *Egypt*, affirms in an Epistle to *Policarp*, that he, with *Apollopha-*

phanes, another Philosopher of great note, saw it, and consider'd it with a great deal of admiration. There are three things which made this Eclipse so very remarkable, the time of its *Appearance*, the time of its *Duration*, and the *Degree* of it. 1. For the time of its Appearance, it was at *full Moon*, when the Moon was not in *Conjunction* with, but in opposition to the Sun. And this appears not only from the testimony of *Dionysius*, who affirms that he saw it at that time, but also from the time of our Lord's *Passion*, which, according to the relation of the *Evangelist*, was at the Celebration of the *Paschever*. Now the *Jews* were bound to celebrate the *Paschal* Solemnity always at full Moon, as is to be seen in the twelfth of *Exodus*. This was no time therefore for a *Natural* Eclipse, because 'twas impossible that the Moon should then interpose betwixt us and the Sun. 2. For the time of its *Duration*, it was full three hours, which is another evidence that this was no *Natural* Eclipse: For the *Natural* Eclipse of the Sun can never last so long, both because of the great disproportion between the Sun's Magnitude, and that of the Moon, and because of the swift motion of the latter.

3. For the *degree* of it, it was a *total Eclipse*. The Sun was so darkned, that (as Historians report, who write of that Eclipse) the *Stars* appear'd. And this is another Argument that it was no *Natural Phenomenon*, it being impossible that the Body of the Moon, which is so infinitely less than that of the Sun, should *totally* eclipse it. Now all these three Remarkables are comprized in the compass of these two Verses. For in that it is said that the *Sun withdrew his light*, it is intimated that the light of the Sun was not *intercepted* by the ordinary *conjunction* of the Moon, but that by an *Extraordinary Commission* from the God of Nature, the Sun rein'd in his light, and *suspended* the emission of his Beams; And this denotes the time of its *appearance*, (*viz.*) when the Moon was not in *Conjunction*. The time of its *duration* is implied by the words, *So long*. And lastly, the *Degree* of it is implied in the last Verse,

*And wonder'd how the Stars their dying
Lord could view.*

Where the appearance of the Stars is not *directly* express'd, but only *insinuated* and *couch'd*, for the more elegance of the thought.

And

*And calm the Relicks of his grief with
Hymns divine.*

It is here supposed that the Passion of our Saviour was now over, and his Father's wrath wholly appeas'd. For I can by no means approve the opinion of those who fancy that our Saviour, in the interim betwixt his Death and Resurrection, descend-*ed locally* into Hell, there to suffer the torments of the damn'd. His own words upon the Cross, *It is finish'd*; His promise to the penitent Thief, that he should be with him that day in *Paradise*, and his last *resignation* of his Spirit into the hands of his Father, do all of them apparently contradict it. But yet, though the *bitter Cup* was wholly drank off upon the Cross, 'tis natural to imagine some little *relish* of it to remain behind for a time. Though all his sufferings and *penal* inflictions were ended before his death, yet, I suppose (and I think very naturally) some little *discomposures* of mind, remaining like the *after-droppings* of a shower, which his Soul could not immediately shake off, upon her release from the Body. In allusion to that of *Virgil*,

*Inter quas Phænissa recens à vulnere Dido
Errabat Sylva in Magna——*

Where the Poet fancies the Ghost of *Dido* being newly releas'd from the pains of Love, could not presently forget her *shady* walks and *melancholy* retirements. Now these *Remains* of Sorrow and *after-disturbances* of mind which cleav'd to the Soul of the *Holy Jesu*, I suppose here to be allay'd by the *Musick* of Angels in his *passage* to *Paradise*.

An

*An Hymn upon the Trans-
figuration.*

I.

HAil *King of Glory*, clad in Robes of Light,
Out-shining all we here call bright :
Hail Light's divinest *Galaxy*,
Hail *Express Image* of the Deity.
Could now thy *Amorous Spouse* thy Beauties view,
How would her wounds all bleed anew ?
Lovely thou art all o're and bright,
Thou *Israel's Glory*, and thou *Gentile's Light*.

II.

But whence this brightness, whence this sudden day ?
Who did thee thus with light array ?
Did thy *Divinity* dispence
T' its *Consort* a more *liberal* influence ?
Or did some *Curious Angel's Chymick Art*
The *Spirits* of purest light impart,
Drawn from the *Native Spring* of day,
And wrought into an *Organized ray* ?

III.

Howe're twas done, 'tis Glorious and Divine,
Thou dost with *radiant wonders* shine.
The Sun with his bright Company,
Are all *gross Meteors* if compar'd to thee.
Thou

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Thou art the fountain whence their Light does flow,
 But to thy ~~will~~ thine *own* dost owe.
 For (as at first) thou didst but say,
Let there be light, and strait sprang forth this won-
 (drous day.

IV.

Let now the *Eastern Princes* come and bring
 Their *Tributary Offering*.
 There needs no *Star* to guide their flight,
 They'll find thee now, *great King*, by thine *own* light.
 And thou, my Soul, adore, love and admire,
 And follow this *bright Guide of Fire*.
 Do thou thy *Hymns* and *Praises* bring,
 Whilst Angels with *Veil'd Faces*, Anthems sing.

The Parting.

I.

DEpart! The Sentence of the *Damn'd* I hear;
Compendious grief, and *black* despair.
 Inow believe the *Schools* with ease,
 (Tho once an *happy Infidel*)
 That should the *sense* no torment seize,
 Yet *Pain* of *Loss* alone would make a *Hell*.

II.

Take all, since me of this you Gods deprive,
 'Tis hardly now worth while to live.
 Nought

Nought in *exchange* can grateful prove,
 No *Second* Friendship can be found
 To match my mourning *Widow'd* Love;
Eden is lost, the rest's but *common* ground.

III.

Why are the *greatest Blessings* sent in vain,
 Which must be lost with *greater pain*?
 Or why do we fondly admire
 The *greatest* good which *Life* can boast?
 When Fate will have the *Bliss* expire,
 Like *Life*, with painful *Agonies* 'tis lost.

IV.

How fading are the Joys we dote upon,
 Like *Apparitions* seen and gone;
 But those which soonest take their flight,
 Are the most *exquisite* and *strong*,
 Like *Angels* visits, *short* and *bright*;
 Mortality's too *weak* to bear them *long*.

V.

No pleasure certainly is so divine
 As when two Souls in Love combine:
 He has the *substance* of all bliss,
 To whom a *Vertuous Friend* is given,
 So sweet harmonious Friendship is,
 Add but *Eternity*, you'll make it *Heaven*.

VI.

The *Minutes* in your conversation spent
 Were *Festivals* of true content.

Here,

Here, here, an *Ark* of pleasing rest,
 My Soul had found that *restless Dove*,
 My *present State* methought was *best*,
 I envy'd none *below*, scarce those *above*.

VII.

But now the better part of me is gone,
 My Sun is *set*, my Turtle *flown*.
 Tho here and there of *lesser* bliss
 Some *twinkling* Stars give *feeble* light,
 Still there a mournful *darkness* is,
 They shine but just enough to shew 'tis *night*.

VIII.

Fatal divorce! What have I done amiss,
 To bear such misery as this?
 The World yields now no real good,
 All happiness is now become
 But *painted* and *deluding* food:
 As meer a *Fiction* as *Elysium*.

IX.

Well then, since nothing else can please my taste,
 I'll *ruminate* on pleasures *past*.
 So when with glorious Visions blest,
 The waking *Hermit* finds no theme
 That's grateful to his thoughtful breast,
 He sweetly *recollects* his pleasing *Dream*.

To a Lady, who asked him,
What Life was ?

TIs not because I *breathe* and *eat*,
'Tis not because a vigorous heart
Drives round my Blood, and does impart
Motion to my Pulse and Heart :
'Tis not such proofs as these can give
Any assurance that I *Live*.
No, no, to *Live* is to *enjoy*;
What marring our *bliss* does *Life* destroy :
The days which pass without *Content*,
Are not *liv'd* properly, but *spent*.
Who says the Damn'd in Hell do *Live* ?
That word we to the *Blessed* give :
The *Sum* of all whose happiness
We by the name of *Life* express.
Well then, if this account be true,
To *Live* is still to *Live* with *You*.

The

The third Chapter of Job Paraphrased.

I.

Curs'd, ever curs'd be that unhappy day,
 When first the Suns unwelcome ray
 I saw with *trembling* eyes, being newly come
 From the *dark Prison* of the *womb*.
 When first to me my vital breath was lent,
 That breath which now must *all* in *sighs* be spent

II.

Let not the Sun his chearing Beams display
 Upon that *wretched, wretched* day;
 But mourn in *Sables*, and all over shroud
 His glories in a *fullen* cloud.
 Let light to *upper* Regions be confin'd,
 And all *below* as black as is my *mind*.

III.

Curs'd be the night which first began to lay
 The *ground-work* of this house of Clay:
 Let it not have the honour to appear
 In the *Retinue* of the year,
 Let all the days shun its society,
 Hate, curse, abandon it as much as I.

IV. Let

IV.

Let *Melancholy* call that Night her own,
 Then let her sigh, then let her groan:
 A general grief throughout all Nature spread,
 With fold'd arms, and drooping head.
 All Harps be still, or tun'd to *such* a strain
 As *Fiends* might hear, and yet not ease their pain.

V.

Let neither Moon nor Stars, with borrow'd light,
Chequer the blackness of that Night:
 But let a pure *unquestion'd* darkness rear
 Her *Sooty* Wings all o're the Air;
 Such as once on th' *Abyss* of *Chaos* lay,
 Not to be pierc'd by Stars, scarce by the edge of Day.

VI.

Why was there then, ah, why a passage free
 At once for *life* and *misery*?
 Why did I not *uncloster'd* from the Womb
 Take my *next* lodging in a Tomb?
 Why with such *cruel* tenderness and care
 Was I *nurs'd* up to Sorrow and Despair?

VII.

For now in sweet repose might I have lain
 Secure from any grief or pain:
 Untouch'd with care, my Bed I should have made
 In Death's cool and refreshing shade.
 I should have slept now in a happy place,
 All calm and silent as the *Empty* space.

VIII. There

VIII.

There where great *Emperours* their heads lay down,
 Tir'd with the *burthen* of a Crown.
 There where the Mighty, Popular and Great,
 Are happy in a dear retreat;
 Enjoy that *solid* Peace which here in vain
 In *Grotts* and *shady walks* they sought & obtain.

IX.

None of *Hells* Agents can or dare molest
 This *awful Sanctuary* of rest.
 No Prisoners sighs, no groanings of the Slave,
 Disturb the *quiet* of the *Grave*.
 From toil and labour here they ever cease,
 And keep a *Sabbath* of sweet rest and peace.

X.

Why then does *Heaven* on Mortals Life bestow
 When 'tis thus *overtax'd* with woe?
 Why am I forc'd to live against my will,
 When all the *good* is *lost* in *ill*?
 My sighs flow thick, my groans sound from afar,
 Like *falling waters* to the traveller.

Sera-

Seraphic Love.

I.

TIs true, *Frail Beauty*, I did once resign
To thy *imperious* Charms this Heart of
mine:

There didst thou *undisturb'd* thy Scepter sway,
And I methought was *pleas'd* to obey.
Thou seem'st so lovely, so divine,
With such sweet Graces didst thou shine,
Thou entertain'st my *Amorous* sense
With such *Harmonious* excellence,
That, *Credulous* and *Silly* I,

With *vain*, with *impious* Idolatry,
Ador'd that *Star* which was to lead me to the *Deity*.

II.

But now, thou soft *Enchantress* of the mind,
Farewel, a change, a mighty change I find;
The Empire of my Heart thou must resign,

For I can be no longer *thine*.

A Nobler, a Diviner Guest,

Has took possession of my Breast,

He has, and must engross it all,

And yet the room is still too *small*.

In vain you tempt my Heart to rove,

A fairer object now my Soul does move,

It must be all *Devotion*, what before was *Love*.

C

III. Through

III.

Through *Contemplation's Optics* I have seen
 Him who is *Fairer than the Sons of men*:
 The *Source* of good, the light *Archetypall*,
 Beauty in the *Original*.
 The fairest of ten thousand, He,
 Proportion all and Harmony.
 All *Mortal Beauty's* but a ray
 Of his bright ever-shining day;
 A little feeble twinkling *Star*,
 Which now the *Sun's* in place must *disappear*;
 There is but *One* that's *Good*, there is but *One* that's
 (*Fair*).

IV.

To thee, thou *only Fair*, my Soul aspires
 With *Holy Breathings*, languishing desires
 To thee m' *inamour'd*, panting Heart does move
 By *Efforts* of *Ecstatic Love*.
 How do thy glorious *streams* of *Light*
 Refresh my *intellectual sight*!
 Tho *broken*, and *strain'd* through a *Skreen*
 Of *envious Flesh* that stands between!
 When shall m' *imprison'd* Soul be free,
 That she thy *Native uncorrected Light* may see,
 And gaze upon thy *Beatific Face* to all *Eternity*?

Atlas Britannicus denuo instauratus.

Nunc age divinum inspira mihi *Phæbe* furorem,
 Maxima ut *Angliacæ* pandatur gloria gentis,
 Ingenii monumentum ingens, durique laboris,
 Utq; *tuum* celebretur opus: Tu nempe perenni
 Qui Cursu immensi Stadium Metiris Olympi,
 Unde omnes *variâ* perlustras lampade terras,
 Ut *tabulâ* exprimerent quem tu *face* circuis orbem
Anglis Author eras. Quis enim sine Numine tantum
 Moliretur opus, Cœptum aut præstare valeret?
 Dux operis *Deus* est, *totamque infusa per arius*
Mens agitat molem, *divinâ conditus arte,*
 Non, nisi *divino* describitur *Auspice* *Mundus*.

Fare age *Calliope* audacis primordia cœpti,
 Quidve *Deum* impulerit tam immensâ involvere
 Mortales animos, tantos aperire labores.
 Forte Pater rerum à Summâ *Saturnius* arce
 Vana hominum studia: & curas speculatus *itantes*,
 Quamque levi insurgant Mortalia pectora fastu,
 Risit, & ad Socios Converso lumine Divos,
 Terricolisne videtis (ait) quam cæca voluptas
 Decipere, atque *viam palantis querere vitæ*?
 Imperio ut cessant Reges, mundique quietem
 Marte agitant, Modicaque armis tellure potiti
 Corde tument, capita alta gerunt, titulisq; superbi

Se rerum *Dominos* credunt Mundique Monarchas
 Adque orbis metas regni procedere fines !
 Cernite *quantillo* rudis iste superbiat *Hæres*.
 Regali incedens passu ; quam turget avito
 Stemmate, & *Augusto* quantum sibi plaudit *agello*.
 Tanquam *aliquid Magnum* in *Nostro* possederit orbe,
 Nescius in quantum pateant terrestria Molem,
 Ignarus *quantilla* mei pars cognita Mundi.
 Quinetiam *Merito* O superi ; fraudamur honore,
 Et Laudum pars magna perit, dum Climata tanta
 Totque latent, tractusque Maris Cœliq; profundi,
Cimmeria tanquam Nebula & Caligine Merfi.
 Quare agite immensi pandatur *Scena* Theatri,
 Nec *Mea* terricolæ lateant Miracula gentes.
 Unde Sciant homines quam sit sibi *Curta supellex*,
 Et *Nostrium* cumulent *geminato* Numen honore.

Est locus *Angliacis* Fama celeberrimus oris,
 Musarum sedes, decus orbis, cura deorum,
 Quem te *Phæbe* ferunt terris magis omnibus unum
 Post-habito Coluisse *Chamo*—————
 Omnigenæ hic florent artes, hic Sidere dextro
 Scire datur rerum Causas, Mundique recessus,
 Aereas tentare domus, animoque per omnem
 Ire globum, arcanasque omnes inquirere sedes.
 Quid si aliquos præstanti animo de *Gente togata*
 Quis solito melius finxerunt pectus *Athene*
 Mundi hujus varios jubeam describere tractus,
 Et tabula *Simulante* Meos aperire Labores.
 Nulla sit ut *Nostro* pars terræ Incognita Mundo !
 Assensere Dii, & plausu reboavit *Olympus*.

Protinus ætherea lapsus *Cyllenius* arce
Bellosum nocte ingreditur, somnoque *Sepultis*
 Inspirat *Patriam* per *amica* insomnia *Mentem*
 Tollite Cuncta (inquit) cœptosque auferte labores,
 Grandius instat opus, cunctos terræque Marisque
 Indigitare Sinus, Complectique omnia Chartis
 Quemque implevistis *Fama* nunc pingere *Mundam*.
 Præcipitate *Moras*, nec plura effatus; ac *Illi*
Ocyus incubuere omnes, pariterque laborem
 Sortiti, artifices designant omnia dextra.
Fervet opus; Cœlum, & terras, Camposque liquentes,
 Urbes, Montesque insignes, Fluviosque pererrant,
 Nullus iter prohibet *Rubicon*, spatia omnia lustrant
 Quot Sol signa tenens duodena volubilis anni.

Ergo iter inceptum peragant, *Carolique Deique*
 Auspiciis procedat opus, nec Meta labori
 Ante esto, quam defuerit quærentibus orbis.

At quæ *Magna* tuas Celebrare *Britannia* laudes
 Musa valet, quot tu palmis, quot digna tropheis,
 Quot totum tuleris *Victricia* Signa per orbem,
 Audacique omnes dextra deviceris oras?
Roma triumphales circum *Capitolia* Currus
 Ducat, & ampla suo indicat solennia *Marti*
 Quum Cruor, & Mors, & longi dispendia belli
Victrices tribuere *Aquilas*; Insignior *Anglis*
 Accumulatur honos, Solamque hæc pulchra *Britannam*
 Palma Manet Gentem, Calamo quod Vicerit orbem.

*Ducis Eboracensis ad Oxonium
Processio.*

Dum *tristes Sacra* residerent sede *Camana*,
Et *gemerent querulo* Secli infortunia plectro,
Dum *Socios* miscet gemitus, & *Murmure* leni
It *plorans Helicon*, luctusque reciprocant unda,
Fama per *Aonias* volitat circumfusa ripas,
Ut placida *aethereos* mutarent sede tumultus
Ad *juga Maonidum* Coeli Statione relicta
Adventare Deos. Adeo omnis *Magna Serena*
Pompa gravis paci est, placidaque inimica quieti.

Janique *nova arrectas* pertentant gaudia mentes
(Semper enim gessisse ferunt *Pia Corde Camanas*)
Latitiaque micant frontes, jam flore superbit
Terra novo, jubar emittit *Sincerius aether*,
Inque magis *Festiva* aptantur Carmina Nervi,
Vicinosque *Helicon* jam pullat *Fortius* agros.

Ruricolae etiam *Nymphas*, pecorisque *Magistros*
Jam gregis oblitos patriis accersit ab arvis
Ad *juga Maonidum* nova fama, deosque videndi
Ambitosus amor. Quae tum, quae lumina vulgi!
Qui plausus! plenae quae stabant agmina vicis!
Terra angusta viris, *Musisque* angustior annis
Defuit, & Coelum votis, & *plausibus* aer.

Tandem

Tandem ubi *Cœlicolæ* ad placidum venere recessum,
Sydereæ gentis Numerosa astante Caterva,
*Summis*que humiles intrarunt *Vertice* portas
 Obvia Musarum processit turba, Deosque
 Sic affata una est. Reliquæ siluere Sorores
 Atque *auditura* Volvit *Fons Mollius* undas.

O quæ *Sidereas* liquistis *Numina* sedes,
 Hospitiumque *humile* in *Nostra* Conquiritis aula,
 Jam *Nostri* Salvete *Lares*, Salvete *Penates*.
 Nos *Pia* turba sumus, Superumque addictior aris,
 Quumque Minaretur Cœlo *Titania* pubes
 Atque affectarent regnum Cœleste *Rebelles*,
 Nos nunquam Meritis Cumulare Altaria donis
 Destitimus, justosque diis persolvere honores.
 Nec coluisse piget; Nos Vestro Numine tutæ
 Alta in pace sumus, trahimusque per otia vitæ.
 Quinetiam hoc uno plus quam pensamur honore
 Cætera si desint, quod magna laude feremur
 Hospitio excepisse *Deos*. Sic fata, recessit.

Inde datum sectantur iter, Studioque Videndi
 Et Sacros adeunt latices, & amœna vireta,
Pieridumque domus lauru Cingente *Verendas*,
Fœlicesque vocant pariter studioque locoque
Mæonidas —————

Quumque Sat *Aonios* lustrassent *Numina* Colles,
 Vivite *Fœlices* (aiunt) hac sede *Camœnæ*.

Vivite concordēs, & quam vix *Purpura* Novit
 Observate fidem, Sacrique à *Vertice* Collis

Despicite insanas *vestri* sine parte pericli
Magnatum lites, & Mundi *hinc* spernite pompam,

Protinus ad superas Cesserunt Numina sedes
Pierisq; sui rediit pax alma Recessus.

The Retirement.

I.

WELL, I have thought on't, and I find
This *busie World* is Non-sense all,
I here despair to please my mind,
Her sweetest *Honey* is so mix'd with *Gall*.
Come then, I'll try how 'tis to be *alone*,
Live to my self a while, and be my *own*.

II.

I've try'd, and bless the *happy* change;
So happy, I could almost vow
Never from this *Retreat* to range,
For sure I ne'r can be so blest as now.
From all th' *allays* of bliss I here am free,
I *pitty others*, and none envy me.

III.

Here in this shady lonely Grove
I *sweetly think* my hours away,
Neither with *Business* vex'd, nor *Love*,
Which in the *World* bear such *Tyrannic* sway :
No Tumults can my *close Apartment* find, (Wind.
Calm as those *Seats above*, which know no Storm nor

IV. Let

IV.

Let *Plots* and *News* embroil the State,
Pray what's that to my *Books* and *Me*?
Whatever be the *Kingdom's* Fate,
Here I am sure t' enjoy a *Monarchy*.
Lord of my self, accountable to none,
Like the first Man in *Paradise*, alone.

V.

While the *Ambitious* vainly sue,
And of the *partial* Stars complain,
I stand upon the *Shore* and view
The mighty *Labours* of the distant *Main*.
I'm flush'd with *silent* joy, and smile to see
The Shafts of *Fortune* still drop *short* of *me*.

VI.

Th' *unease* *Pageantry* of State,
And all the *plagues* to *Thought* and *Sense*
Are far remov'd; I'm plac'd by Fate
Out of the *Road* of all *Impertinence*.
Thus, tho my *fleeting* Life runs *swiftly* on,
'Twill not be *short*, because 'tis *all* my *own*.

The

The Infidel.

I.

Farewel *Fruition*, thou grand *Cruel* Cheat,
Which first our hopes dost *raise* and then de-
Farewel thou *Midwife* to *Abortive* Bliss, (feat.
Thou *Mystery* of fallacies.

Distance presents the Object fair,
With Charming features and a graceful air,
But when we come to *seize* th' inviting prey,
Like a *Sky Ghost*, it vanishes away.

II.

So to th' *untinking* Boy the distant Sky
Seems on some Mountain's Surface to *relié*;
He with *ambitious* haste climbs the ascent,
Curious to touch the *Firmament*:
But when with an unweari'd pace
Arriv'd he is at the *long-wish'd-for* place,
With Sighs the sad defeat he does deplore,
His *Heaven* is still as distant as before.

III.

And yet 'twas long e're I could *thoroughly* see
This grand Impostor's frequent Treachery.
Tho often Fool'd, yet I should still dream on
Of Pleasure in *Reversion*.

Tho

Tho still he did my hopes *deceive*,
His fair Pretensions I would still *believe*.
Such was my *Charity*, that tho I know
And found him *false*, yet I would think him *true*,

IV.

But now he shall no more with *shews* deceive,
I will no more *enjoy*, no more *believe*.
Th' *unwary* Jugler has so often shewn
His *Fallacies*, that now they'r known.
Shall I *trust* on ? the Cheat is plain,
I will not be *impos'd* upon again.
I'll view the *Bright* appearance from *afar*,
But never try to *catch* the falling Star.

On a Musician, supposed to be mad
with Musick.

I.

POOR dull mistake of *low* Mortality,
To call that *Madness*, which is *Ecstasy*.
'Tis no disorder of the Brain,
His Soul is only set t' an *higher strain*.
Out-soar he does the Sphere of *Common* sense,
Rais'd to *Diviner* Excellence;
But when at highest pitch, his Soul out-flies
Not *Reason's* Bounds, but those of *vulgar* Eyes.

II. So

II.

So when the *Mystic Sibyl's* Sacred Breast
 Was with *Divine Infusions* posselt,
 'Twas *Rage* and *Madness* thought to be,
 Which was all *Oracle* and *Mystery*.
 And so the Soul that's shortly to *Commence*
 A Spirit free from dregs of *Sense*,
 Is thought to *rave*, when She discourses high,
 And *breathes* the lofty strains of *Immortality*.

III.

Music, thou *Generous Ferment* of the Soul,
 Thou universal *Cement* of the whole,
 Thou *Spring* of *Passion*, that dost inspire
Religious Ardours, and *Poetic Fire*,
 Who'd think that *Madness* should be ascrib'd to thee
 That mighty *Discord* to thy *Harmony*?
 But 'twas *such ignorance* that call'd the Gift *Dying*
 Of various *Tongues*, *Rage*, and th' effects of *Wine*.

IV.

But thou, *Seraphic Soul*, do thou advance
 In thy sweet *Ecstasy*, thy *pleasing Trance*:
 Let thy brisk passions mount still higher
 Till they joyn to the *Element* of *Fire*.
 Soar higher yet, till thou shalt *calmly* hear
 The Music of a well-tun'd *Sphere*:
 Then on the *lumpish mass* look down, and thou
 (shalt know) wi
 The *Madness* of the *World*, for groveling still below

Th

The Consolation.

I.

I Grant 'tis bad, but there is some relief
 In the *Society* of Grief.
 'Tis sweet to him that *mourns* to see
 A whole House clad in Sorrow's *Livery*.
 Grief in *Communion* does *remiss* appear, (Ear.
 Like *harsher* sounds in *Consort*, which *less* grate the

II.

Men would not Curse the Stars, did they dispence
 In *common* their ill Influence.
 Let none be *rich*, and Poverty
 Would not be thought so great a *Misery*.
 Our discontent is from *comparison*; (own.
 Were better states *unseen*, each man would like his

III.

should *partial* Seas wreck my poor Ship alone,
 I might with cause my Fate bemoan.
 But since before I *sink*, I see
 A *Numerous Fleet* of Ships descend with me,
 Why don't I with *content* my breath resign?
 will, and in the greater ruine *bury* mine.

The

The Choice.

*Stet quicunque volet potens
Aula culmine lubrico, &c.*

I.

NO, I shan't envy him whoe're he be
That stands upon the Battlements of State,
Stand there who will for me,
I'd rather be *secure* than *great*.
Of being so *high* the *pleasure* is but *small*,
But *long the Ruine* if I chance to fall:

II.

Let me in some sweet shade serenely lye,
Happy in *leisure* and *obscurity*;
Whilst others place their joys
In *popularity* and *noise*.
Let my soft minutes glide *obscurely* on
Like *subterraneous* streams, *unheard*, *unknown*.

III.

Thus when my days are all in *silence* past,
A good plain *Country-man* I'll dye at last.
Death cannot chuse but be
To him a *mighty* misery,
Who to the World was *popularly* known,
And dies a *Stranger* to *himself* alone.

The

The Meditation.

I.

IT must be done (my Soul) but 'tis a strange,
 A dismal and *Mysterious* Change,
 When thou shalt leave this *Tenement* of Clay,
 And to an *unknown somewhere* Wing away;
 When *Time* shall be *Eternity*, and thou (not *how*,
 Shalt *be* thou knowst not *what*, & *live* thou knowst

II.

Amazing State! no wonder that we dread
 To think of *Death*, or view the *Dead*.
 Thou'rt all wrapt up in Clouds, as if to thee
 Our very *Knowledge* had *Antipathy*.
 Death could not a more *Sad* Retinue find,
Sickness and *Pain* before, and *Darkness* all behind.

III.

Some Courteous Ghost, tell this *great Secrecy*,
 What 'tis you *are*, and we *must be*.
 You warn us of *approaching* Death, and why
 May we not know from you what 'tis to *Dye*?
 But you, having *shot* the Gulph, delight to see
 Succeeding Souls *plunge* in with *like uncertainty*.

IV. When

IV.

When Life's close Knot by *Writ* from Destiny,
Disease shall cut, or *Age* weary;
 When after some *Delays*, some *dying* Strife,
 The Soul stands *shivering* on the *Ridge* of Life;
 With what a *dreadful* Curiosity
 Does she *launch* out into the Sea of vast Eternity.

V.

So when the Spacious Globe was delug'd o're,
 And *lower* holds could save no more,
 On th' *utmost* Bough th' astonish'd Sinners stood,
 And view'd th' *advances* of th' *encroaching* Flood.
Ore-topp'd at length by th' Element's encrease,
 With *horror* they resign'd to the *untry'd* Abyss.

The

The Irreconcilable.

I.

I Little thought (*my Damon*) once, that *you*
 Could prove, and what is more, to *me*, *untrue*.
 Can I forget such *Treachery*, and *Live*?
Mercy it self would not this *Crime* forgive.
Heaven's Gates refuse to let *Apostates* in,
 No, that's the *Great unpardonable Sin*.

II.

Did you not vow by all the Powers above,
 That you could none but *dear Orinda* love?
 Did you not swear by all that is Divine,
 That you would *only* be and *ever* mine?
 You did, and yet you live *securely* too,
 And think that *Heaven's false* as well as *you*.

III.

Believe me, *Love's* a thing *much* too *divine*
 Thus to be *Ape'd*, and made a mere *design*.
 'Tis no less *Crime* than *Treason* here to *feign*,
 'Tis Counterfeiting of a *Royal Coin*.
 But ah! *Hypocrisy's* no where so common grown,
 As in *Most Sacred* things, *Love* and *Religion*.

D

IV. Go

IV.

Go seek *new Conquests*, go, you have my leave,
 You shall not *Grieve* her whom you could *deceive*.
 I don't *lament*, but *pitty* what you do,
 Nor take that *Love* as *lost*, which ne'r was *true*.
 The way that's left you to *befriend* my *Fate*,
 Is now to prove *more constant* in your *Hate*.

of

A Discourse of the Care and Improvement of Time.

TO be careful how we manage and employ our Time, is one of the *first* Precepts that is *taught* in the School of Wisdom, and one of the *last* that is *learn'd*. The first and *leading* dictate of Prudence is, That a Man propose to himself his true and best interest for his End ; and the next is, That he make use of all those means and opportunities whereby that end is to be attain'd. And betwixt these two there is such a close connexion, that he who does not *do* the *latter*, cannot be supposed to *intend* the *former*. He that is not careful of his actions, shall never perswade me that he seriously proposes to himself his best interest, as his *end*, for if he did, he would as seriously apply himself to the regulation of the *other* as the *means*. And so he that is not careful of his Time, cannot in reason be supposed to be careful of his Actions ; for if he were, he would certainly have a special regard to the *opportunity* of their performance.

But, as I observ'd in the beginning, though this Precept be one of the *Elementary* dictates of Prudence, and stands written in the *first page* of the *Book of Wisdom*; yet such is the sottishness and stupidity of the World, that there is none that is more *slowly learn'd*. And 'tis a prodigious thing to consider, that, although among all the *Talents* which are committed to our *Stewardship*, Time upon several accounts is the most precious, yet there is not any one of which the generality of men are more profuse and regardless. Tho it be a thing of that inestimable value, that 'tis not distributed to us *intirely*, and at once, like other Blessings, but is *dealt* out in minutes and little parcels, as if man were not fit to be trusted with the *intire* possession of such a *choice* Treasure, yet there are very many that think themselves so *overstock'd* with it, that instead of *husbanding* it to advantage, the main business of their thoughts is how to rid their hands of it, and accordingly they catch at every shadow and opportunity of *relief*; strike in at a venture with the next Companion, and so the *dead Commodity* be *taken off*, care not who be the *Chapman*. Nay, 'tis obvious to observe, that even those persons who are frugal and thrifty
in

in every thing else, are yet extremely prodigal of their best *Revenue*, Time ; *Of which alone* (as *Seneca* neatly observes) *it's a Virtue to be Covetous.*

Neither may this Censure be fastned only upon the *unthinking* multitude, the *Sphere* of whose Consideration is supposed to be very *narrow*, and their Apprehension *short-sighted* ; but I observe that many of those who set up for Wits, and pretend to a more than ordinary sagacity, and delicacy of Sense, do notwithstanding spend their Time very *unaccountably*, and live away whole days, weeks, and sometimes months together, to as little purpose (tho it may be not so innocently) as if they had been asleep all the while. And this they are so far from being ashamed to own, that they freely boast of it, and pride themselves in it, thinking that it tends to their Reputation, and commends the greatness of their Parts, that they can *support* themselves upon the Natural *stock*, without being beholden to the *Interest* that is brought in by Study and Industry.

But if their Parts be so good as they would have others believe, sure they are *worth* improving ; if not, they have the more *need* of it. And tho it be an Argument of a *rich*

mind, to be able to *maintain* it self without *labour*, and *subsist* without the *advantages* of Study, yet there is no man that has such a portion of Sense, but will understand the use of his Time better than to put it to the tryal. Greatness of Parts is so far from being a discharge from *Industry*, that I find Men of the most exquisite Sense in all Ages were always most curious of their Time: Nay, the most Intelligent of all Created Beings (who may be allow'd to pass a truer estimate upon things than the finest Mortal Wit) value Time at a high rate. *Let me go* (says the Angel to the importunate Patriarch) *for the day breaketh*. And therefore I very much suspect the excellency of those mens Parts, who are dissolute and careless mis-spenders of their Time: For if they were men of *any thoughts*, how is it possible but these should be some in the number? (*viz.*)

- ' That this Life is wholly in order to ano-
- ' ther, and that Time is that *sole opportunity*
- ' that God has given us for transacting the
- ' great business of Eternity: That our work
- ' is great, and our day of working short,
- ' much of which also is lost and render'd use-
- ' less, through the cloudiness and darkness of
- ' the *Morning*, and the thick vapours and
- ' un-

' unwholesome fogs of the *Evening*; the
 ' ignorance and inadvertency of *Youth*, and
 ' the Diseases and Infirmities of *Old Age*: That
 ' our portion of Time is not only short, as
 ' to its duration, but also uncertain in the
 ' possession: That the loss of it is irrepara-
 ' ble to the loser, and profitable to no body
 ' else: That it shall be severely accounted
 ' for at the great Judgement, and lamented
 ' in a sad Eternity.

He that considers these things (and sure
 he must needs be a *very unthinking* man that
 does not) will certainly be choice of his
 Time, and look upon it no longer as a
 bare state of *duration*, but as an *Opportu-
 nity*; and consequently will let no part
 of it (no *considerable* part at least) slip
 away either *unobserv'd* or *unimprov'd*. This
 is the most effectual way that I know of to
 secure to ones self the *Character* of a Wise-
 man *here*, and the *reward* of one *hereafter*.
 Whereas the *vain Enthusiastic* Pretenders
 to the *Gift* of Wit, that trifle away their
 Time, betray the *shallowness* and *poverty* of
 their Sense to the *discerning few*; or what-
 ever they may pass for here among their
 fellow Mortals, do most infallibly make
 themselves *cheap* in the sight of *Angels*.

Of Solitude.

IT has been urg'd as an Objection, by some *Atheistical* Persons, against the existence of a God, that if there had been such a perfect Being, who was *completely* happy in the enjoyment of himself, he would never have gone about to make a World. Now, tho this Objection contributes nothing to the support of Atheism (the design of God in Creating the World being not to *increase* his happiness, but to *Communicate* it) yet it proceeds upon this true supposition, That *Society* is a *Blessing*. It is so, and that not only *respectively*, and in reference to the present circumstances of the World, and the *Necessities* of this Life, but also *simply*, and in its own Nature; since it shall be an *Accessory* to our bliss in Heaven, and add many *moments* to the *weight* of *Glory*. Neither will the truth of this assertion be at all weaken'd by alledging that no benefit or advantage accrues to God by it, for that it becomes unbeneficial to him (tho a Blessing in its own nature) is purely by accident, because God eminently containing in himself all *possible* good,

good, is incapable of any *New Accession*.

And as Society is in its own nature an instrument of Happiness, so is it made much more so by the indigencies and infirmities of Men. Man, of all Creatures in the World, is least qualify'd to live alone, because there is no Creature that has so many necessities to be reliev'd. And this I take to be one of the great *Arts* of Providence, to secure mutual amity and the *reciprocation* of good turns in the World, it being the Nature of Indigency, like common danger, to indear men to one another, and make them herd together, like *Fellow-Sailors* in a *Storm*. And this indeed is the true case of Mankind, we all Sail in one *bottom*, and in a *rough* Sea, and stand in need of one anothers help at every turn, both for the *Necessities* and *Refreshments* of Life. And therefore I am very far from commending the undertaking of those *Ascetics*, that out of a pretence of keeping themselves *unspotted from the World*, take up their quarters in *Desarts*, and utterly abandon all Humane Society. This is in short (to say no more of it) to put themselves into an incapacity either of *doing* any good to the World, or of receiving any from it: and certainly that can be no desirable

rable state. No, this *Eremitical* way of Living is utterly inconsistent with the Circumstances and Inclinations of Humane Nature ; he must be a God, *Self-sufficient* and *Independent* that is fit for this state of absolute and perfect Solitude, and in this *rigorous* sense, *It is not good for man* (tho in *Paradise* it self) *to be alone.*

But tho Society, as 'tis opposed to a state of perfect and perpetual Solitude, be a Blessing, yet considering how little of it there is in the World that is *good*, I think it advisable for every man that has sense and thoughts enough, to be his own Companion, (for certainly there is more required to qualify a man for his *own* company than for *other* men's) to be as frequent in his Retirements as he can, and to communicate as little with the World as is consistent with the duty of doing good, and the discharge of the common offices of Humanity. 'Tis true indeed (as *Seneca* says) *Miscende & alternanda sunt Solitudo & frequentia : Solitude and Company are to have their turns, and to be interplaced.* But Wise-men use to dedicate the largest share of their Lives to the former, and let the *best* and *most* of their Time go to make up the *Canonical Hours* of Study.

Study, Meditation and Devotion. And for this, besides the practice of Wise-men, we have the *Authentic* example of our B. Lord himself, Who, (as 'tis reasonably supposed (for he had pass'd the thirtieth year of his Life before he enter'd upon the stage of Action, and then also sought all opportunities to be alone, and oftentimes purchas'd Retirement at the expence of Night-watches) allotted the greatest part of his little Time here on Earth to Privacy and Retirement; and 'tis highly probable, would have liv'd much more reservedly, had not the peculiar business of his function made it necessary for him to be conversant in the World. The inclination of our Lord lay more toward the *Contemplative* way of Life, tho the interest of Mankind engaged him oftentimes upon the *Active*. And 'tis very observable, that there is scarce any one thing which he vouchsafed to grace with so many marks and instances of favour and respect as he did Solitude. Which are thus summ'd up by the excellent Pen of a very great Master of Learning and Language; *It was Solitude and Retirement in which Jesus kept his Vigils; the desert places heard him pray, in a privacy he was born, in*

The Great Exemplar.
the

the Wildernefs he fed his thousands, upon a Mountain apart he was transfigured, upon a Mountain he died, and from a Mountain he afcended to his Father. In which Retirements his Devotion certainly did receive the advantage of convenient circumftances, and himfelf in fuch difpofitions twice had the opportunities of Glory.

Indeed, the *Satisfactions* and *Advantages* of Solitude (to a perfon that knows how to improve it) are very great, and far tranfcending thofe of a *Secular* and *Popular* Life. First, as to Pleasure and Satisfaction, whoever confiders the great variety of mens humours, the peevifhnefs of fome, the pride and conceitednefs of others, and the impertinence of moft; he that confiders what unreasonable *terms of Communion* fome perfons impofe upon thofe that partake of their Society; how rare 'tis for a man to light upon a Company, where, as his firft Salutation, he fhall not prefently have a Bottle thruft to his Nofe; he, I fay, that confiders thefe and a thoufand more grievances, wherewith the *folly* and *ill nature* of men have confpired to burthen Society, will find, take one time with another, Company is an occafion of almoft as much *difpleafure* as *pleafure*. Where-

Whereas in the mean time the Solitary and Contemplative man sits as safe in his Retirement as one of *Homer's Heroes* in a Cloud, and has this only trouble from the follies and extravagancies of men, that he *pitties* them. He does not, it may be, laugh so loud, but he is better *pleas'd*: He is not perhaps so often *merry*, but neither is he so often *disgusted*; he lives to himself and God, full of Serenity and Content.

And as the *Pleasures* and *Satisfactions* of Solitude exceed those of a Popular Life, so also do the *Advantages*. Of these there are two sorts, *Moral* and *Intellectual*; to both which Solitude is a *particular* friend. As to the first, it is plain that Solitude is the proper opportunity of Contemplation, which is both the *Foundation* and the *Perfection* of a Religious Life. It is (as the same excellent Person fore-cited says elsewhere of a single Life) *the huge advantage of Religion, the great opportunity for the Retirements of Devotion, which being empty of Cares is full of Prayers, being unmingled with the World is apt to converse with God, and by not feeling the warmth of a too forward and indulgent Nature, flames out with holy Fires, till it be burning like the Cherubim and the most extasy'd Order of holy and unpolled Spirits.*

And

And for this reason 'twas that the Ancients chose to build their Altars and Temples in Groves and Solitary Recesses, thereby intimating, that Solitude was the best opportunity of Religion.

Neither are our *intellectual* advantages less indebted to Solitude. And here, tho I have in a great measure anticipated this consideration (there being nothing necessarily required to compleat the Character of a Wise-man, besides the knowledge of God and himself) yet I shall not confine myself to this instance, but deduce the matter further, and venture to affirm that all kinds of *Speculative* knowledge as well as *practical*, are best improved by Solitude. Indeed there is much talk about the great benefit of keeping Great men company, and thereupon 'tis usually reckon'd among the *disadvantages* of a *Country* life, that those of that condition want the opportunities of *Learned Conversation*. But to confess the truth, I think there is not so much in it as people generally imagine. Indeed, were the Souls of men lodg'd in *transparent cases* that we might read their thoughts; would they *communicate* what they know, were it the fashion to discourse learnedly, 'twere

worth

worth while to frequent the *Cabals* of Great men: But when it shall be counted a piece of *errant Pedantry*, and defect of good breeding to start any Question of Learning in Company; when every man is as shy of his Notions as of a *Fairy-treasure*; and makes his Head not a Repository or *Exchequer* of Knowledge, but a *Grave* to bury it in: A man may be a constant attendant at the *Conclaves* of Learned men all his life long, and yet be no more the wiser for't than a *Book-worm* is for dwelling in *Libraries*. And therefore, to speak ingenuously, I don't see for my part wherein the great advantage of great Conversation lies, as the humours of men are pleas'd to order it. Were I to inform my self in business, and the management of affairs, I would sooner talk with a plain illiterate Farmer or Trades-man than the greatest *Vertuoso* of *The Society*; and as for Learning (which is the only thing they are supposed able to discourse well of) *that* in point of *Civility* they decline: So that I find I must take refuge at my Study at last, and there *redeem* the Time that I have *lost* among the *Learned*.

A Discourse concerning Heroic Piety.

SINCE the Practice of Religion in general is not only the *Natural Instrument* of our *present Happiness*, but also the *only and indispensable condition* of our *Future*, one would think there were but little left for the Orator to do here, the naked efficacy of Self-love, and a serious consideration of our true and main Interest, being sufficient to engage us upon Religious performances. But he that shall undertake to recommend the Practice of *Heroic Piety*, has a much heavier task, not only because he perswades to *higher degrees of Verrue*, but because he is to address himself wholly to a *weaker Principle*. For since our *interest* is secured by the performance of *necessary Duty*, there remains nothing but a Principle of *Generosity* to carry us on to the *higher advances*, the more glorious *Atchievements* in Religion. And what small probability there is that it will often do so, may appear from the ill success

success of the former and more prevailing Principle. For if the greatest interest imaginable can prevail with so very few to perform what is indispensably necessary to secure it, sure there is little hopes that *Generosity*, which is a much *weaker* Principle, should engage *many* upon greater performances.

But yet, notwithstanding these discouragements, since our Blessed Saviour has taught us to pray, not only for the performance of God's will in *general*, but that it be *done on Earth as it is in Heaven*; that is, with the greatest zeal, readiness and alacrity, with all the degrees of *Seraphic* ardency that frail Mortality is capable of, I think a *Persuasive* to *Heroic Piety* may be a proper and useful undertaking; it being very reasonable we should make that the object of our *endeavours*, which our Saviour thought fit to make the matter of our *Prayers*.

In discoursing upon this subject, I shall proceed in this Method. 1. I shall state the notion of *Heroic Piety*, and shew what I mean by it. 2. I shall demonstrate that there is such a thing. And 3. I shall offer some *Persuasives* to recommend the practice of it.

The Notion of *Heroic* Piety will be best understood by considering what the Moralists mean by *Heroic* Vertue. For the one carries the same proportion in *Religion* that the other does in *Morality*. But before I proceed to explain the *Thing*, I suppose it will not be amiss to give some short account of the *Name*. That it is derived from the *Greek* word *Ἥρω*, is very obvious, all the difficulty is concerning the derivation of the *Greek* word it self. And here I find the Grammarians are very much divided ; some derive it ἀπὸ τῆς ἀρετῆς, but that seems somewhat hard ; others derive it from αἶθρ, because 'twas supposed by the Ancients that the Souls of the *Heroes* had their abode in the Air, where they had a near prospect of humane affairs ; and accordingly *Xenon* in *Lactantius*, lib. 7. calls *Heroes* the Souls of wise men separated from their Bodies, and ranging about in the Air ; others derive it from Ἑρᾶ, because the *Heroes* are a kind of *terrestrial* Gods, according to that definition which *Lucian* gives of an *Hero*, ὅς μῆτε θεὸς μῆτε ἄνθρωπος, ἀλλὰ σωμαφότερον, one that is neither God nor man, but a compound of both. Others derive it from Ἥρα, the name of *Juno*, who was the President Goddess of the

the Air, intimating thereby either the Habitation, or the light aerial Nature of the *Heroes*. And this Etymology I remember is approv'd of by *St. Austin, lib. 10. de Civ. Dei, cap. 21.* But methinks the most natural and significant one is that of *Plato*, who derives it from *ἔρως*, because of that ardent and passionate Love which the *Heroes* are supposed to have for God. And as the word *Hero* is very doubtful as to its Etymology, so is it also various in its acceptation. Sometimes it is attributed to illustrious and eminent Personages while *living*, such as act and live above the ordinary strain of Mortality, and render it a very disputable Point whether they are Gods or men. A Character which *Homer* gives of the great *Hector*, *Iliad* ω.

— Ὅς Διὸς ἔχε μὲν ἀνδράσιν, ὃδ' ἐφύκει
Ἀνδρός γε Διὸς παῖς ἐμμέναι, ἀλλὰ θεοῖο.

And in this sense the word *Hero* is used by *Hesiod*,

Ἀνδρῶν Ἡρώων θεῶν γένος, οἱ καλέονται
Ἡμίθεοι —

Sometimes by *Heroes* are meant the Souls of wise and good men departed, as is evident

from the fore-cited testimony in *Laertius*. But in the *Platonic* Philosophy by *Heroes* is understood a middle sort of Being, inferiour to those whom they stile the *Immortal Gods*, and superiour to Man; as is to be seen at large in *Hierocles*.

Beyond these three acceptations of the word, I do not know of any other. But this is certain, that in whatsoever sense it is used, it always denotes something great and extraordinary. So that from hence 'tis easie to collect what is meant by *Heroic Vertue*, (*viz.*) Such a vehement and intense pursuance of a mans last and best end, as engages him upon such excellent and highly commendable actions, which advance him much above the ordinary level of humane Nature, and which he might wholly omit, and yet still maintain the Character of a good man. *Aristot.* in his *Ethics*, l. 7. c. 1. calls it *τὴν ὑπὲρ ἡμᾶς ἀρετὴν*, that Vertue that is above us. By which I suppose, he does not mean that it is above our reach and unattainable, but that it is above our obligation, and that when it is attain'd, it will elevate us above our selves.

In proportion to this Notion of Heroic Vertue, I understand by *Heroic Piety* those excellent degrees and eminencies of Religion which

which, tho' to arrive at be extremely laudable, yet we may fall short of them without Sin, God having not bound them upon us as parts of *Duty*, or made them the *Conditions* of our Salvation, but only recommended them by way of *Counsel*, and left them as instances of *Generosity*. Of this sort are those high and singular Exercises of Religion which are the fruits and effects of a profound and steady contemplation of God: Such as are the passionate applications of *Seraphic Love*, acts of ecstatic joy and complacency in the Perfections of the Divine Nature, holy transports of Zeal and Devotion, Praise and Adoration: earnest contentions and very numerous returns of Prayer, actual references of our most natural and indifferent actions to Gods glory, extraordinary works of Charity, great severities of Mortification and Self-denial, abstemiousness from many lawful Pleasures, perpetual *Celebacy*, and whatsoever else are the excellent products of a *contemplative* and *affectionate* Religion.

Thus far of the Notion of *Heroic Piety*. I come now to my second Undertaking, which was to shew that there is such a thing. The universality and sincerity of Obedience be indispensably required of every Christian, and

consequently every part of Religion obliges under the penalty of Damnation as to its *kind*, yet that there may be some *degrees* to the attainment of which we are not so obliged, will evidently appear from the proof of this one single Proposition, That every one is not bound to do what is *best*. The reasonableness of which Proposition appears from the very nature of the thing; for since that which is *Best* is a *Superlative*, it necessarily supposes the *Positive* to be *good*: And if so, then we are not bound to that which is *best*, for if we were, then that which is *only good* would be *evil*, (it being short of what we are bound to) which is contrary to the supposition.

This Argument I take to be *Demonstrative*, and therefore 'twould be a kind of *Supererogation* in me to alledge any more. But however, for the clearer eviſion and stronger confirmation of this Aſſertion, I farther conſider, that the Scripture conſiſts of *Counſels* as well as *Commands*. This diſtinction, however denied by ſome in the heat of their

Matth. 19. 12. *ingagements* againſt Popery, is plainly intimated in ſeveral places of the New Teſtament, and allow'd by the beſt of our Divines. Now if
and 21. 1 Cor. 7. 1. 6. 7. 25. 38.
2 Cor. 8. 10.
2 Cor. 9. 6.

ſome

some things are matter of Counsel onely, 'tis obvious to conclude two things. 1. From their being *counsell'd*, that they are good (nothing being matter of Counsel but what is so) and secondly, from their being *only* counsell'd, that they do not oblige, and consequently, that there are some degrees of good that we are not obliged to:

It is farther observable, that in Scripture there is mention made of a threefold Will of God. *Rom. 12. 2.* τὸ θέλημα τὸ ἀγαθόν, καὶ εὐάρεστον καὶ τέλειον, *That Will which is good, that which is well-pleasing, and that which is perfect.* The first of these denotes absolute Duty, the two last the various degrees of Perfection and Heroic Excellence. Thus for St. Paul to preach the Gospel to the *Corinthians*, was an Act of strict Duty which he could not leave undone without incurring that woe which he annexes to the omission of it. *1 Cor. 9. 16.* τὸδε ἀδαπάνως κηρύσσειν προαιρέτως φιλοτιμία, καὶ διὰ τὸ το γούχημα ἔστι. *But to preach without charging them was an instance of Generosity, and in that respect there was room for boasting.*

Theophylact.

Thus again, for a Jew to allot the tenth part of his Revenue every third year toward the relief of the Poor, was an act of express Duty, and in doing of that, he would but satis-

fixe the obligation of the Law ; But now if in his charitable contributions he should exceed that proportion, according to the degrees of the excess, so would the degrees of his Perfection be. Thus again in the matter of *Devotion*, daily Prayer is generally concluded to be a *Duty*, and by some *Criticks* that it be *twice* perform'd, in proportion to the returns of the Jewish Sacrifices, Morning and Evening ; But now if a more generously disposed Christian should add a *third* time, or out of *abundance* of zeal should come up to the *Psalmist's* resolution of (*Seven times a day will I praise thee*) this would be a *free-will Offering*, *well pleasing* and of *sweet savour*, but not *commanded*.

From these and many other instances, which, if necessary, I could easily produce, it plainly appears that Religion does not consist in an *indivisible point*, but has a *Latitude*, and is capable of *more* and *less*, and consequently there is room for *voluntary Oblations* and *Acts of Heroic Piety*.

I know it is usually objected here, that what is supposed to be thus *Heroically* perform'd, is *inclusively* enjoyn'd by vertue of those comprehensive words, (*Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy*

thy Soul, &c.) But, I conceive, that all which is intended by that phrase, will amount to no more than, First, a *sincere* love of God, as 'tis oppos'd to that which is *partial* and *divided*; and secondly, such a degree of loving him, as admits of nothing into *Competition* with him. And thus far reach the *Boundaries* of indispensable Duty, it being impossible that he who does not love God in this *sense* and *degree*, should keep his Commandments. But beyond this, there are higher degrees, which, because we may fall short of without sin, are the more excellent when attain'd. So that in this Precept of loving God, as in all other instances of Religion, there is a great latitude, it being very possible for two Persons to love God *sincerely* and with their *whole Soul*, and yet in different measures (which is observ'd even among the Angels, the *Seraphins* having their name from their *excess* of Love) nay, for the same Person alwayes to love God *sincerely*, and yet at some times to exceed himself, and with his Saviour (who to be sure never fail'd of *necessary* Duty) to *pray yet more earnestly*.

There is another Objection yet behind, which I think my self concern'd to answer, as well in my *own* defence as that of my *Argument*.

gument. Some perhaps may be so weak to imagine, that by asserting such a thing as *Heroick Piety*, and that a Christian may do *more* than he is commanded, I too much favour the Doctrine of *Supererogation*. I confess the word *Supererogation*, however innocent as to its primitive acceptation, does now sound somewhat *odly*, and therefore I am the more willing to decline it ; tho I very much question whether the *Papists* are not something odiously represented in this point. But my business is not to vindicate them, but my self, in order to which I consider, that *for a Man to do more than he is commanded*, is an ambiguous expression, and may denote either that he can perform the *whole* Law of God and *more*, or that, tho he fail of his Duty in many Instances, and consequently with the rest of Mankind, is *concluded under Sin* ; Yet in some others he may exceed it, by *pressing forward* to some degrees of excellency he is not obliged to. I do not assert the *former* of these, but the *latter*, and if the *Doctors* of the *Roman Church* mean no more by their *Supererogation* than this latter Notion of the word imports (and I must ingenuously confess it does not yet appear to me that they do) I cannot but acknowledge that I am so far a *Papist*,

Papist, for I really believe, and I think I have sufficiently proved, that there are certain degrees in *Religion*, which we are not obliged to under Pain of Sin, and consequently that he who arrives so far, does (according to the latter notion of the *Phrase*) *do more then he is commanded*.

Having in the foregoing *Periods* stated the Notion of *Heroick Piety*, and demonstrated that there is such a thing, I proceed now to my third and last undertaking, which was to offer some *Perſwafives* to recommend the Practice of it. First then, I consider that Religion is the Perfection of a Man, the improvement and accomplishment of that part of him wherein he resembles his Maker, the pursuance of his best and last end, and consequently his *Happiness*. And will a man set *bounds* to his *Happiness*? Will he be no more happy than he is *commanded*, no more than what will just serve to secure him from a *miserable Eternity*? Is not *Happiness* desirable for it *self*, as well as for the avoiding of *Misery*? Why then do we deal with it as with *dangerous Physick*, weighing it by Grains and Scruples and nice Proportions? Why do we drink so *moderately* of the *River of Paradise*, so *sparingly* of the

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Well of Life? Are we affraid of making too nigh advances to the State of Angels, of becoming *too* like God, of *antedating* Heaven? Are we affraid our Happiness will flow in too *thick* upon us, that we shall not bear up against the Tide, but sink under the too *powerful* enjoyment? Hereafter indeed, when we are blest with the *Beatific Vision*, and the Glories of the Divine Brightness shall flash too *strong* upon our Souls, so that our Happiness begins to be *lessen'd* by its *greatness*; We may then with the Angels that attend the Throne, *veil* our Faces, and *divert* some of the too *exuberant* blessedness: But now in this *Region* we are far enough from being *under* the *Line*, there is no danger of such *Extremity*, but rather the contrary, and therefore it would be now most advisable for us to be as *Happy*, and to that end, as *Religious* as we can.

Secondly, I consider, that since God, out of the abundance of his *overflowing* and *communicative* Goodness, was pleas'd to create and design man for the best of Ends, the fruition of himself in endless Happiness, and since he has prescribed no other Conditions for the attainment of this Happiness; but that we would live happily here in this State of Probation, having made nothing our Duty but
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what would have been best for us to do whether he had commanded it or no, and has thereby declared, that he is so far only pleas'd with our Services to *him* as they are beneficial to *our selves*; this must needs be a most in-dearing engagement to one that has the least spark of Generosity or Ingenuity, to do something for the sake of so *good* a God, beyond the Measures of Necessity, and the regards of his main and final interest. This is the *only Tribute* of Gratitude we are capable of paying God for giving us such good, such reasonable, and righteous Laws. Had the conditions of our eternal welfare been never so hard, arbitrary, and contradictory to our present Happiness, yet mere interest would in-gage us to perform *necessary Duty*, and shall we do no more out of a principle of *Love* to our excellent Lawgiver, for making our *present Happiness* the *Condition* of our *future*? Shall the *Love* of *God* constrain us to do no more then what we would do *merely* for the *Love* of *our selves*? shall we stint our Performances to him, who sets no Measures to his Love of us? Can our Generosity be ever more seasonably employ'd than in endeavouring to please him in *extraordinary Measures*, whose *Pleasure* is to see us *happy* even *while*

we

we *please* him? For so is the will of the wise and good Governour of the World, that in serving *him* we should serve *our selves*, and like *Adam* in his dressing and cultivation of Paradise, at the same time discharge the Employment which God sets us about, and consult our *own* Convenience: So that it fares with us in our religious Exercises as with the Votary that sacrifices at the Altar, who all the while he *pleases* and serves his God, enjoys the *perfumes* of his *own Incense*.

Thirdly, I consider, that every Man has a restless Principle of Love implanted in his Nature, a certain *Magnetism* of Passion, whereby (according to the *Platonic* and true notion of Love) he continually aspires to something more excellent than himself, either really or apparently, with a design and inclination to perfect his Being. This affection and disposition of Mind *all* Men have, and at *all* times. Our other Passions ebb and flow like the Tide, have their Seasons and Periods like *intermitting Fevers*. But this of Love is as constant as our *Radical* heat, as inseparable as *thought*, as even and equal as the Motions of Time. For no man does or can desire to be happy more at one time than at another, because he desires it always in the highest degree *possible*.

'Tis

'Tis true, his Love, as to particular objects, may increase or decrease, according to the various apprehensions he has of their excellencies ; but then, like *Motion* in the Universe, what it loses in one part it gains in another ; so that in the whole it remains always alike, and the same. Now this *Amorous* Principle which every man receives with his Soul, and which is breath'd into him with the breath of Life, must necessarily have an object about which it may exercise itself, there being no such thing in *Love* (if in *Nature*) as an *Element* of *Self-sufficient* Fire. For tho we may easily and truly frame an abstract notion of Love or Desire in *general*, yet if we respect its *real* existence, we shall as soon find *First Matter* without *Form*, as *Love* without a particular *Object*. And, as 'tis necessary to the very being of Love that it have an object, so is it to our content and happiness, that it be a proportionate and satisfying one ; for otherwise that passion which was intended as an instrument of *happiness*, will prove an *affliction* and *torment* to us. Now there is but one such object to be found, and that is God. In the application of our Passions to other things, the advice of the Poet is exceeding necessary,

Quic-

Quicquid amas cupias non placuisse nimis.
 Martial.

That we should be very cautious how far we suffer our selves to be engaged in the love of any thing, because there is nothing but disappointment in the enjoyment, and uncertainty in the possession. We must needs therefore be miserable in our Love, unless God be the object of it. But neither is our happiness sufficiently secured by making God the object of our Love, unless we concenter our whole affections upon him, and (in the strictest sense of the Phrase) love him with all our Heart and with all our Soul. For otherwise, whatever portion of our Love does not run in this Channel, must necessarily fix upon disproportionate and unsatisfying objects, and consequently be an instrument of discontent to us. 'Tis necessary therefore to the compleating of our happiness, that that object should engross all our affections to it self, which only can satisfie them; and (according to the comparison of an ingenious Platonist) that our minds should have the same habitude to God that the Eye has to Light

Marsilius Ficinus, Tom. 2.
 pag. 315.

Light. Now the Eye does not only love Light above other things, but *delights* in nothing else. I confess, such an *absolute* and *entire* *Dedication* of our love to God as this, is not always practicable in this Life. It is the privilege and happiness of those *confirm'd* Spirits who are so swallow'd up, in the *Comprehensions* of *Eternity*, and so perpetually ravish'd with the Glories of the Divine Beauty, that they have not the *power* to turn aside to any *other* object. But tho this Superlative Excellency of Divine Love be not attainable on this side of the *thick darkness*, it being the proper effect of *open Vision*, and not of *Contemplation*; yet however, by the help of this latter, we may arrive to many degrees of it, and the more entire and undivided our love is to God, the fewer disappointments and dissatisfactions we shall meet with in the World, which is a very strong ingagement to *Heroic Piety*.

Fourthly, I consider, that the degrees of our *Reward* shall be proportionable to the degrees of our *Piety*: We shall reap as plentifully as we sow, and at the great day of Retribution, we shall find, that besides the general *Collation* of Happiness, peculiar *Coronets*

ronets of Glory are prepared for *Eminent Saints*. Indeed, all hearty and sincere lovers of God and Religion shall partake of the *glories* of the *Kingdom*; but some shall sit nearer the Throne than others, and enjoy a more *intimate* perception of the *Divine Beauty*. All the true *Followers* of Jesus shall indeed *feast* with him at the *great Supper*, but some shall be placed nearer to him than others, and still there shall be a *Beloved Disciple* that shall *lean* on his *Bosom*. I know this Doctrine concerning different degrees of Glory, is (and indeed what is there that is not) very much question'd by some, and peremptorily deny'd by others; but since it is so highly agreeable to the goodness and bounty of God, and to the *Catholic Measures* of Sense and Reason; and is so mightily favour'd, if not expressly asserted in many places of Scripture, I shall not here go about to establish the truth of it, but taking it for granted, do urge this as another consideration of great moment, toward encouraging the practice of *Heroic Piety*.

Fifthly, and lastly, I consider, that We have indeed but very little time to serve God in. The Life of man at longest is but short,

short, and considering how small a part of it we *live*, much *shorter*. If we *deduct* from the *Computation* of our Years (as we must do, if we will take a true estimate of our *Life*) that part of our time which is spent in the incogitancy of Infancy and Childhood, the impertinence and heedlessness of Youth, in the necessities of Nature, Eating, Drinking, Sleeping, and other Refreshments; in business and worldly Concerns, engagements with Friends and Relations, in the offices of Civility and mutual intercourse; besides a thousand other unnecessary avocations: we shall find that there is but a small portion left even for the Retirements of Study, for our improvement in Arts and Sciences, and other intellectual accomplishments. But then if we consider what great *disbursements* of our time are made upon *them* also, we shall find that Religion is *crowded* up into a very *narrow compass*; so narrow, that were not the rewards of Heaven matter of *express Revelation*, 'twould be the greatest *Presumption* imaginable to hope for them upon the condition of such *inconsiderable* Services. Since then our time of serving God is so very short, so infinitely

disproportionate to the rewards we expect from him, 'tis but a reasonable piece of ingenuity to work *with all our might*, and do as much in it as we can: to supply the poverty of Time by *frugal* management and *intenseness* of affection, to serve God *earnestly*, *vigorously*, and *zealously*; and in one days Devotion to *abbreviate* the ordinary Piety of *many years*. 'Tis said of the Devil, that he prosecuted his malicious designs against

the Church with greater earnestness
 Revel. 12. 12. and vigour, because *he knew he had but a short time*. And shall not the same consideration prevail with a *generous* Soul to do as much for God and Religion, as the Devil did *against* them? 'Tis a shame for him that has but a *short* part to act upon the *Stage*, not to perform it *well*, especially when he is to act it but *once*. Man has but one *state of Probation*, and that of an exceeding short continuance, and therefore, since he cannot serve God *long*, he should serve him *much*, employ every minute of his life to the best advantage, *thicken* his Devotions, *hallow* every day in his *Kalendar* by Religious exercises; and every *action* in his *Life* by holy references and *designments*; for
 let

let him make what haste he can to be *wise*,
 Time will *out-run* him. This is a Considera-
 tion of infinite moment to him that duly
 weighs it; and he that *thus numbers his*
days, will find great reason to *apply his*
heart to more than ordinary degrees of Wis-
dom.

F 3

A N

...that makes what he can to be
...will out-weigh him. This is a
...of his mind to him that
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H A P P I N E S S,
I N A
LETTER to a FRIEND:
ENQUIRING

Wherein the Greatest Happiness attainable by
Man in this Life does consist.

By JOHN NORRIS, Fellow of *All-Souls*
Colledge in *Oxford*.

The Second Edition.

————— *Sollicitis vitam consumimus annis,
Torquemurque metu cæcæque cupidine rerum,
Æternisque Senes curis dum quarimus ævum,
Perdimus, & nullo votorum fine beati,
Vikturos agimus semper, nec vivimus unquam.*

Manilius lib. 4.

L O N D O N,
Printed for James Norris, at the *Kings-Arms*
without *Temple-Bar*. 1684.

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Upon a Treatise called The Idea of Happiness.

*Some Truths there are of so refin'd a strain,
They all Commerce with vulgar Souls dis-
And nobler Spirits only entertain; (dain,
Who, while the Sordid Croud feed gross beneath,
The Purer Element exalted breath.
To such alone our Author does prepare
An Intellectual Treat of Heavenly fare;
Rich Manna, true Elixir, drawn with art
More exquisite than Hermes could impart;
Substantial Happiness, Joys uncreate,
Beyond the reach of Time, beyond the power of fate;
Foretastes of Bliss which in this life commence
To the pure Intellect, abstract from sense;
Such Extasies as raise the human Soul,
In trance ineffable, above the Starry Pole;
Uniting, Man by ways not understood,
To God, the universal Spring of Good.
Great Mystery! which tho' it soars above
My groveling Reason, I adore and love.
Blest Union, which mankind advances more
Than by the Fall it was debas'd before.
Man was at first below the Angels made,
But now with higher Glory is array'd.*

They

*They for their Errors found no offer'd Grace,
For ever banish'd from their Makers Face.
But God himself in Human Form descends,
And man's Redemption by his Death commends.
By which vast Merit happy we receive
Both in and with the Deity to Live.
Who that his Dignity did truly know,
Would fix his fond desires on things below?
All the huge Boast of Life is but a Dream
Compar'd with even a thought of this high Theme,
The great Idea, which so nobly Shines
In the rich habit of thy wondrous Lines.
Farewell vain World, and all thy empty Pride,
With which it glitters only till 'tis try'd,
When the false Lustre vanishing away
The baseness of the Metal does betray.
For I, directed by thy light Divine,
To true and lasting Joys my Soul resign,
Which here on Earth begin in less degree,
And higher run to all Eternity.*

London, Feb. 12.
1684.

G. P.

To the admir'd (though to me un-
known) Author, on his ingenious
Treatise, The Idea of Happi-
ness.

Some Ages of the World had pass'd, before
Our Fathers found the use of Sail and Oar:
Embark'd securely in a hollow Tree,
They rudely ventur'd first to Plough the Sea.
With Branches they suppli'd the use of Oar,
Their Rule and Compass was the adjacent Shore.
But still Experience taught them, and they grew
Both Wiser every day, and Bolder too.
And every Generation found out something new.
At length by some Great Hero was made known,
To men, the Art of Navigation.
And now in foreign Goods the Merchants trade,
Islands begin to be inhabited.
But still their Knowledge did contracted lye
In little room, lame was their Geography,
And to affirm Antipodes was Heresie.
Till the Great Drake resolv'd the weighty doubt
By compassing the spacious World about.
The mighty Drake, who Regions did explore,
Known only to One greater Traveller, the Sun,
(before.
So

*So we had never seen the brightest ray
Of Truth Divine, hadst thou not shewn the way.
Thou art our Drake, Thou who alone didst dare
To move in an unknown, untrodden Sphere,
And, for less active Mortals, didst descry
New Worlds of most refin'd Philosophy.
So, by the Conduct of an Angel's Hand,
The Israelites possess'd the happy Land.
To thee, on Contemplation's Mount, were shewn
The Heavenly Glories, on the Face they shone,
And with thee thou hast brought the inherent
(Brightness down.)*

*In thy Idea we ingraven see,
In Characters Divine, Felicity.
Thou a new Map of Paradise hast drawn,
And more exact than er'e before was known.
Which (if there's ought that Poets may foretell)
Shall last as long ('tis drawn so rarely well)
As men believe a Heaven, or fear a Hell.*

London, Feb. 7.
1684.

W. R. No

O N

Mr. Norris's Idea of Happiness.

I.

WHEN our inspired Writer, mounting on
 The Wings of tow'ring Contemplation,
 Could not to our low Sphere his flight confine,
 But with a Genius Divine,
 Flew high, and Cut the pure Ætherial Line;
 When all dissolv'd in Extasies,
 He his Idea fram'd of Happiness;
 A bright fac'd Cherub 'twas that led the way,
 And clear'd his Eyes with a Cælestial Ray,
 And that he might to men make known
 His strange Mysterious Revelation,
 Inspir'd his Soul with Gusts and Strains Divine,
 Beyond whatè're were given by the Sacred Nine,
 With him he took his flight
 Through the vast Orbs of Light,
 Left all our gilded Toys,
 Our Atmosphere of dusky Joys,
 No false disguises could his Eyes betray
 Nor gaudy Lures his flight delay,
 Towards Heaven he made, and everlasting Day.

II.

*The Seraphins they guarded him along,
 And as he upwards did aspire,
 With Hallelujahs rais'd his Genius higher,
 And with Cœlestial Cadence fill'd his Tongue,
 Till he at length pass'd on,
 Through many a Blissful Region,
 To the bright Court above,
 The Element of Love.
 Where, with enlign'd and inamour'd Eyes
 In Beatific extasies,
 He view'd the dazzling Jasper mound
 That did the Empyrean Seat surround,
 The great Metropolis of Bliss,
 And in its Anti-courts did sit,
 Enjoying all that could be fit,
 For one not made Immortal yet.
 Thus did his Soul from Heaven but one remove
 Abstracted by Seraphic Love,
 From ties Corporeal well nigh rent,
 By powerfull Energys of Thought intent
 Dwell fix'd in Contemplation on the bright
 Ideas of the God of Light.
 Till scorning sensual Objects, he could feast
 On Praises, and on Anthems make Repast.
 And did on this side Heaven with rays Divine
 Of antedated and immortal Glory Shine.*

III.

*Then, like a bright Columbus, down the Skies
He sail'd, his Voyage told, and new discoveries
Of Islands Fortunate, and Coasts of Bliss
And Continents of everlasting Happiness.*

*And of them Charts and Maps he drew,
Fair, like th' Original, and True,
Casting the Rumb's by ^{wh}ch you are to Steer, (clear
And how the Shelves to pass, and how the Rocks to
Of Joys that true and good appear.*

*He tells how the Coast bears, and how to tack
Lest we for Shoar the Clouds mistake,
Lest into gulphs of sensual Joys we fall*

*Pursuing Intellectual;
He shews the shortness of the formers date,
How few they are, and how they Circulate
Still to the Point from whence they first begun,
That nothings good nor new under the Sun.*

IV.

*Then, as a Radient Cynosure, he leads
By these his Lines of Light
And paths then Milky way more bright,
Souls more refin'd; Them he conducts and guides,*

*By many a Degree
Of the large Latitude of Extasie,
In th' Ocean of perpetual delight*

Through

*Through Visions, Raptures, Elevations high,
To the round Haven of Eternity.*

*Till by Calm Silence all a round
And still tranquillity 'tis found
That an eternal Paradise is nigh.*

*And having made the Port
Where joys without allay resort,
They take their larger Portions with the Blest
In Vision, Love, and Joy, and endless Rest,*

London, March 25.
1684.

S. P.

A N

An Idea of Happiness, &c.

S I R,

THO you have been pleas'd to assign me the Task of an Angel, and in that Respect have warrant'd me to disobey you ; yet since, a considerable part of that experimental Knowledge which I have of Happiness is owing to the Delight which I take in your vertuous and endearing Friendship, I think 'tis but reasonable I should endeavour to give you an *Idea* of that, whereof you have given me the *Possession*.

You desire to know of me wherein the greatest Happiness attainable by man in this Life does consist. And here, tho I see my self engaged in a work already too difficult for me, yet I find it necessary to enlarge it : For, since the greatest Happiness, or *Summum Bonum* of this Life is a *Species* of Happiness in general, and since it is call'd (Greatest) not because absolutely perfect and compleat ; but inasmuch as it comes nearest to

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that

that which indeed is so, it will be necessary first to state the Notion of Happiness in General, and then to define wherein that Happiness does consist which is perfect and compleat, before I can proceed to a Resolution of your Question.

By Happiness, in the most general Sense of the word, I understand nothing else but an Enjoyment of any Good. The least Degree of Good has the same Proportion to the least Degree of Happiness as the greatest has to the greatest, and consequently as many ways as a man enjoys any Good, so many ways he may be said to be happy : neither will the Mixture of Evil make him forfeit his Right to this Title, unless it either *equals* the Good he enjoys, or *exceeds* it : And then indeed it does ; but the Reason is, because in strictness of Speaking, upon the whole Account the man enjoys no Good at all : For if the Good and the Evil be equal-balanc'd, it must needs be indifferent to that man either to be or not to be, there being not the least *Grain* of good to determine his Choice : So that he can no more be said to be happy in that Condition, than he could before he was born. And much less, if the Evil exceeds the Good : For then he is not only
not

not happy, but absolutely and purely miserable : For after an exact Commensuration supposed between the Good and the Evil, all that remains over of the Evil is pure and simple Misery ; which is the Case of the Damn'd : And when 'tis once come to this (whatever some Mens *Metaphysicks* may persuade them) I am very well satisfied, that 'tis better not to be than to be. But now on the other side, if the Good does never so little out-weigh the Evil, that *Overplus* of Good is as pure and unallay'd in its Proportion, as if there were no such Mixture at all ; and consequently the Possession of it may properly be call'd Happiness.

I know the Masters of Moral Philosophy do not treat of Happiness in this Latitude ; neither is it fit they should : For their Business being to point out the ultimate End of Humane Actions, it would be an impertinent thing for them to give any other *Idea* of *Happiness* than the highest : But however this does not hinder but that the General *Idea* of *Happiness* may be extended farther, even to the Fruition of any Good whatsoever : Neither is there any reason to find Fault with the Latitude of this Notion, since we acknowledge Degrees even in Glory.

In this General *Idea* of *Happiness* two things are contain'd. One is, some Good, either real or apparent, in the Fruition of which we are said to be in some measure or other happy. The other is the very Fruition it self. The first of these is usually called *Objective Happiness*, and the latter *Formal*. Some I know divide Happiness into these as distinct *Species*; but I think not so artificially: For they are both but constituent Parts, which joyntly make up one and the same Happiness: Neither of them are sufficient alone, but they are both equally necessary. That the last of these is a necessary Ingredient, I think no doubt can reasonably be made: For what would the greatest Good imaginable signify without Fruition? And that the former is likewise necessary is no less certain: For how can there be such a thing as Fruition without an Object? I grant 'tis not at all necessary that the Object be a real substantial Good; if it appear so, 'tis sufficient.

From this Distinction of *real* and *apparent* Good, some have taken occasion to distinguish of Happiness likewise into two sorts, *real* and *imaginary*: But I believe, upon a more narrow Scrutiny into the matter, 'twill be

be found, that all Happiness, according to its Proportion, is equally *real*; and that that which they term *Imaginary*, too well deserves the Name, there being no such thing in Nature: For let the Object of it be never so *Phantastick*, yet it must still carry the Semblance and Appearance of Good (otherwise it can neither *move* the Appetite nor please it, and consequently be neither an Object of *Desire* nor of *Fruition*;) and if so, the Happiness must needs be real, because the Formality of the Object, tho' twere never so true and real good, would notwithstanding lie in the *Appearance*, not in the *Reality*: Whether it be real or no is purely accidental: For, since to be happy can be nothing else but to enjoy something which I desire, the Object of my Happiness must needs be *enjoy'd* under the same Formality as 'tis *desired*. Now since 'tis desired only as apparently good, it must needs please me when obtained under the same Notion. So that it matters not to the Reality of my Happiness, whether the Object of it be really good, or only apprehended so, since if it were never so *real*, it *pleases* only as *apparent*. The Fool has his Paradise as well as the Wise-man, and for the time is as happy in it; and a kind

Delusion will make a Cloud as pleasing as the Queen of *Heaven*. And therefore I think it impossible for a man to think himself happy, and (during that Perswasion) not really to be so. He enjoys the *Creature* of his own Fancy, worships the *Idol* of his Imagination, and the happiest man upon Earth does no more : For let the Circumstances of his Life be what they will, 'tis his Opinion only that must give the Relish. Without this, Heaven it self would afford him no Content, nor the Vision of God prove *Beatific*. 'Tis true, the man is seated at the *Spring-Head* of Happiness, is surrounded with excellent Objects ; but alas, it appears not so to him ; he is not at all affected with his Condition, but, like *Adam*, lies fast in a dead Sleep in the midst of Paradise.

The Sum of this Argument is this ; Good is in the same manner the Object of *Fruition*, as 'tis of Desire ; and that is not as *really* good in its own Nature, but as 'tis *judged* so by the Understanding : And consequently, tho it be only apparent, it must needs be as effectual to *gratify* the Appetite as it was at first to *excite* it during that Appearance. So long as it keeps on its Vizer and imposes upon the Understanding, what is wanting in the

the thing, is made up by an *obliging* Imposture, and *Ignorance* becomes here the Mother of *Happiness* as well as of *Devotion* : • But if the man will *dare* to be wise, and too curiously examine the superficial Tinsel-Good, he undeceives himself to his own Cost, and, like *Adam*, adventuring to eat of the Tree of *Knowledge*, sees himself naked, and is ashamed. And for this reason I think it impossible for any man to love to be flatter'd : 'Tis true, he may delight to hear himself commended by those who indeed do flatter him ; but the true reason of that is, because he does not apprehend that to be Flattery which indeed is so ; but when he once thoroughly knows it, 'tis impossible he should be any longer delighted with it. I shall conclude this Point with this useful Reflection, That since every Man's Happiness depends wholly upon his own Opinion, the Foundation upon which all envious Men proceed, must needs be either *false* or very *uncertain*. False, if they think that outward Circumstances and States of Life are all the Ingredients of Happiness ; but uncertain however : For since they measure the Happiness of other Men by their own Opinion, 'tis mere Chance if they do not misplace their Envy, unless they were sure the other

Person was of the like Opinion with themselves. And now what a vain irrational thing is it to disquiet our selves into a dislike of our own Condition, merely because we mistake another Man's ?

Thus far of the Notion of Happiness in General ; I now proceed to consider that Happiness which is *ὕψις καὶ ὁλόκληρος* (as *Plato* speaks) sound and entire, perfect and compleat. Concerning the general Notion of which, all men, I suppose, are as much agreed as they are in the *Idea* of a *Triangle*. That 'tis such a State than which a better cannot be conceiv'd : In which there is no Evil you can fear, no Good which you desire and have not ; That which fully and constantly satisfies the Demand of every Appetite, and leaves no possibility for a desire of Change ; or to summ it up in that comprehensive Expression of the Poet,

Quod sis esse velis, nihilque malis.

When you would always be what you are, and (as the Earl of *Roscommon* very significantly renders it) do *Rather* nothing. This I suppose is the utmost that can be said or conceiv'd of it, and less than this will not be enough. And thus far we are all agreed. For I suppose, the many various Disputes

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maintained by Philosophers concerning Happiness, could not respect this general Notion of it, but only the particular *causes* or *means* whereby it might be acquired. And I find *Tully* concurring with me in the same Observation, *Ea est beata vita* (says *Lib. 3. de Fin.* he) *querimus autem non quæ sit, sed unde.* The difficulty is not to frame a conception of a perfectly happy State in the general, but to define in particular wherein it consists.

But before I undertake this Province, I think it might not be amiss to remove one Prejudice, which, because it has gain'd upon my self sometimes in my Melancholy Retirements, I am apt to think it may be incident to other men also. It is this, Whether after so many Desputes about, so many restless endeavours after this state of perfect Happiness, there be any such thing or no. Whether it be not a meer *Idea*; as imaginary as *Plato's Common-wealth*, as fictitious as the Groves of *Elysium*. I confess, this suspicion has oftentimes *overcast* my mind with black thoughts, damp'd my Devotion, and as it were, clipp'd the Wings of my Aspiring Soul. And I happened to fall into it upon a serious reflection on the nature of Fruition in the several Periods and Circumstances of my Life. For

I observ'd according to my *Narrow* experience, that I never had in all my Life the same thoughts of any good in the very time of the enjoying it as I had before. I have known when I have promised my self vast Satisfactions, and my imagination has presented me at a distance with a fair *Landscape* of Delights, yet when I drew nigh to grasp the alluring Happiness, like the *Sensitive Plant* it contracted it self at the touch, and shrink'd almost to nothing in the Fruition. And though after the Enjoyment is past, it seems great again upon *Reflection* as it did before in *Expectation*, yet should a *Platonical Revolution* make the same Circumstances recur, I should not think so. I found 'twas ever with me as with the *Traveller*, to whom the Ground which is before him, and that which he has left *behind* him seems always more curiously embroider'd and delightful, than that which he *stands* upon. So that my Happiness, like the time wherein I *thought* to enjoy it, was always either *past* or *to come*, never *present*. Methought I could often say upon a *Recollection*, How happy *was* I at such a time! Or when I was in *expectation*. How happy *shall* I be if I compass such a design! But scarce ever, I *am* so. I was pretty well pleas'd

pleas'd methought while I expected, while I hoped, till Fruition jogg'd me out of my pleasing slumber and I knew it was but a Dream. And this single Consideration has often made me even in the very pursuit after Happiness, and full career of my Passions, to stop short on this side of Fruition, and to choose rather with *Moses* upon Mount *Nebo* to entertain my fancy with a remote Prospect of the *Happy Land*, than to go in and Possess it, and then *Repine*. How then shall Man be happy, when setting aside all the Crosses of Fortune, he will complain even of *Success*, and *Fruition* it self shall *disappoint* him!

And this melancholy reflection bred in me a kind of Suspicion, that for all that I knew it might be so in *Heaven* too. That although at this distance I might frame to my self bright *Ideas* of that Region of Bliss; yet when I came to the Possession of it, I should not find that perfect Happiness there which I expected, but that it would be always to *come* as 'tis now, and that I should seek for Heaven even in Heaven it self. That I should not fully acquiesce in my condition there, but at length desire a Change. And that which confirm'd me the more in this *unhappy Scepticism*, was, because I consider'd that a great number of excellent Beings who

who enjoyed the very *Quintessence* of Bliss, who were as happy as God and Heaven could make them, grew soon uneasy and weary of their State and *left their own Habitation*. Which argues that their Happiness was not *perfect* and *compleat*, because otherwise they would not have *desired* a Change, since that very desire is an Imperfection. And if Happiness be not compleat in Heaven, sure 'tis impossible to be found any where else.

Before therefore I proceed to define wherein perfect Happiness does consist, I think it necessary to endeavour the removal of this Scruple, which, like the flaming Sword, forbids *entrance into Paradise*. In order to which, I shall inquire into the *true Reason* why these Sublunary good things when enjoyed do *neither* answer our *expectations*, nor satisfy our *Appetites*. Now this must *proceed either* from the nature of Fruition it self, or from the Imperfection of it, or from the Object of it, or from our selves. I confess, did this *defect* proceed from the *very nature* of Fruition (as is supposed in the Objection) 'tis impossible there should be any such thing as *perfect Happiness*, since 'twould *faint away* while *enjoy'd*, and *expire* in our *embraces*. But that it cannot proceed thence, I have this
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to offer, Because Fruition being nothing else but an Application or Union of the Soul to some good or agreeable Object, it is impossible that should *lessen* the good enjoyed. *Indeed* it may lessen our *estimation* of it, but that is because we do not rightly consider the nature of things, but promise our *selves* infinite Satisfaction in the *enjoyment* of finite Objects. We look upon things through a false Glass, which Magnifies the Object at a distance much beyond its just Dimensions. We represent our *future enjoyments* to our selves in such *favourable* and *partial Ideas* which abstract from all the *inconveniencies* and allays which will really in the *Event* accompany them. And if we thus over-rate our *Felicities* before-hand, 'tis no wonder if they baulk our *Expectations* in the *Fruition*. But then it must be observed, that the *Fruition* does not *cause* this *Deficiency* in the Object, but only *discover* it. We have a better insight into the Nature of things near at hand, than when we stood afar off, and consequently discern those *defects* and *imperfections*, which, like the qualities of an ill Mistress, lay hid all the time of *Courtship*, and now begin to betray themselves, when 'tis come to *enjoyment*. But this can never happen but where the Object is finite. An
infinite

infinite Object can never be over-valued and consequently cannot frustrate our *Expectations*.

And as we are not to charge *Fruition* with our *disappointments* but our selves (because we are accessory to our own *delusion* by taking false measures of things) so neither is the *Unsatisfactoriness* of any condition to be imputed to the Nature of *Fruition* it self, but either to the *imperfection* of it or to the finiteness of the Object. Let the Object be never so perfect, yet if the *Fruition* of it be in an imperfect measure there will still be room for *Unsatisfactoriness*, as it appears in our *enjoyment* of God in this Life. Neither can a *finite Object* fully satisfy us though we enjoy it never so thoroughly. For since to a full satisfaction and *acquiescence* of Mind 'tis required that our Faculties be always *entertained* and we ever *enjoying*: it is impossible a *finite Object* should afford this Satisfaction, because all the good that is in it (being finite) is at length run over, and then the *enjoyment* is at an end, The flower is suck'd dry, and we necessarily desire a Change. Whenever therefore our *enjoyment* proves unsatisfying, we may conclude, that either the Object is *finite*, or the *Fruition* imperfect. But then how came the *Angels* to be dissatisfy'd

fy'd with their Condition in the Regions of *light* and *immortality*, when they drank freely of the *Fountain of Life* proceeding out of the Throne of God, with whom *Revel. 26.* is fulness of Joy, and at whose Right hand are *Pleasures for evermore*. Here certainly there is no room either for the *finiteness* of the Object, or the *imperfection* of *Fruition*. And therefore their dissatisfaction can be imputed to no other Cause, than the Nature of *Fruition* in general, which is to *lessen* the good *enjoyed*, as was supposed in the *Objection*. This I confess presses hard, and indeed, I have but one way to *extricate* my self from this difficulty, and that is by supposing a *State of Probation* in the *Angels*. That they did not immediately upon their *Creation* enjoy an *infinite Object*, or if they did, yet that 'twas in an *imperfect measure*. For should it be granted that they were at first confirmed in *Bliss* and *completely happy* both in *respect* of *Fruition* and *Object*, as we suppose they are now, I cannot *conceive* it possible they should be dissatisfy'd with their Condition. This being repugnant to the *Idea* of *Perfect Happiness*.

Since then this dissatisfaction must be derived either from the imperfection of the *Fruition*

tion, or the finiteness of the Object, and not from the Nature of Fruition in the general, to infer the possibility of perfect *Happiness*, there needs no more to be supposed than the *existence* of a Being full fraught with infinite inexhaustable good, and that he is able to Communicate to the full. There may be then such a thing as Perfect *Happiness*. The possibility of which may also be further *proved* (tho not *explicated*) from those boundless Desires, that *immortal Thirst* every man has after it by Nature : Concerning which I observe, that nothing does more constantly, more inseparably cleave to our Minds than this Desire of perfect and consummated Happiness : This, as *Plato* pathetically expresses it, is, *πέρας τῶν πόγων τὸ χαλλίστον ὁ μέγας ἀγών, καὶ ἐλπίς ἡ μεγάλη*, the most excellent end of all our Endeavours, the great Prize, the great Hope. This is the Mark every Man shoots at, and tho we miss our Aim never so often, yet we will not, cannot give over ; but, like passionate Lovers, take *Resolution* from a *Repulse*. The rest of our Passions are much at our own Disposal ; yield either to Reason or Time ; we either Argue our selves out of them, or at least out-live them. We are not always in Love with Pomp and Grandeur, nor always dazzled

dazzled with the glittering of Riches ; and there is a Season when Pleasure it self shall Court in vain : But the desire of perfect Happiness has no Intervals, no Vicissitudes, it out-lasts the Motion of the Pulse, and survives the Ruins of the Grave. *Many Waters cannot quench it, neither can the Floods Drown it :* And now certainly God would never have planted such an Ardent, such an importunate Appetite in our Souls, and as it were *interwoven* it with our very Natures, had he not been able to satisfy it.

I come now to shew wherein this perfect Happiness does consist, concerning which, I affirm in the first place, that it is not to be found in any thing we can enjoy in this Life. The greatest Fruition we have of God here, is imperfect, and consequently unsatisfactory. And as for all other Objects they are finite, and consequently, though never so fully enjoy'd, cannot afford us perfect Satisfaction. No ; *Man knoweth not the price thereof :* *Neither is it to be found in the* ^{Job 28.} *Land of the Living.* *The Depth saith, it is not in me, and the Sea saith, it is not in me.* The Vanity of the Creature has been so copiously discoursed upon, both by Philosophers and Divines, and is withall so obvi-

ous to every thinking man's *Experience*, that I need not here take an *Inventory* of the *Creation*, nor turn *Ecclesiastes* after *Solomon*. And besides, I have already anticipated this Argument in what I have said concerning *Fruition*. I shall only add one or two Remarks concerning the Objects of *Secular Happiness*, which are not so commonly insisted upon, to what has been there said. The first is this, that the Objects wherein Men generally seek for *Happiness* here, are not only *finite* in their *Nature*, but also *few* in *number*. Indeed, could a Man's Life be so contrived, that he should have a new *Pleasure* still ready at hand as soon as he was grown weary of the Old, and every day enjoy a *Virgin Delight*, he might then perhaps like Mr. *Hobbs* his Notion, and for a while think himself happy in this continued *Succession* of new *Acquisitions*. But alas, Nature does not treat us with this *Variety*. The compass of our *enjoyments* is much shorter than that of our *Lives*, and there is a *Periodical Circulation* of our *Pleasures* as well as of our *Blood*.

—*Versamur ibidem atque insumus usque.*
Nec nova vivendo procuditur ulla voluptas.

Lucretius.

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The Enjoyments of our Lives run in a perpetual Round like the Months in the *Kalendar*, but with a quicker Revolution; we dance like *Fairies* in a *Circle*, and our whole Life is but a nauseous *Tantology*: We rise like the Sun, and run the same Course we did the day before, and to morrow is but the same over again: So that the greatest Favourite of Fortune will have Reason often enough to cry out with him in *Seneca*, *Quosque eadem*? But there is another Grievance which contributes to defeat our Endeavours after perfect Happiness in the Enjoyments of this Life; Which is, that the Objects wherein we seek it, are not only *finite* and *few*; but that they commonly prove Occasions of greater Sorrow to us than ever they afforded us *Content*. This may be made out several ways, as from the Labour of Getting, the Care of Keeping, the fear of Losing, and the like Topicks, commonly insisted on by others; but I wave these, and fix upon another Account less blown upon, and I think more material than any of the rest. It is this, that altho the Object loses that great appearance in the *Fruition* which it had in the *expectation*, yet after it is gone it Resumes it again. Now we, when we lament the loss, do not take our measures

from that appearance which the Object had in the *Enjoyment* (as we should do to make our sorrow not exceed our *Happiness*) but from that which it has in the *reflection*, and consequently we must needs be more *miserable* in the loss then we were *happy* in the *enjoyment*.

From these and the like *Considerations*, I think it will evidently appear, that this perfect *Happiness* is not to be found in any thing we can enjoy in this Life. Wherein then does it consist? I answer positively, in the full and entire Fruition of God. He (as Plato speaks) is *κλεινὸν ἡ ἀρχιτεκτονικὸν τέλος*, the Proper and Principal End of Man, the Center of our *Tendency*, the Ark of our *Rest*. He is the Object which alone can satisfy the appetite of the most Capacious Soul, and stand the *Test* of Fruition to Eternity. And to enjoy him fully is perfect Felicity. This in general, is no more than what is deliver'd to us in Scripture, and was believ'd by many of the *Heathen Philosophers*. But the manner of this Fruition requires a more particular *Consideration*. Much is said by the Schoolmen upon this Subject, whereof, in the first place, I shall give a short and methodical account, and then fix upon the Opinion which I best approve of. The first thing that I observe,

serve, is, that 'tis generally agreed upon among them, that this Fruition of God consists in some *Operation*; and I think with very good Reason. For as by the *Objective* part of *perfect Happiness* we understand that which is best and last, and to which all other things are to be referr'd; So by the *Formal* part of it must be understood the best and last Habitudo of Man toward that best Object, so that the *Happiness* may both ways satisfy the Appetite, that is, as 'tis the best thing, and as 'tis the Possession, Use, or Fruition of that best thing: Now this habitudo whereby the best thing is perfectly possess'd, must needs be some *Operation*, because *Operation* is the ultimate perfection of every Being. Which *Axiom* (as *Cajetan* well observes) must not be so understood as if *Operation* taken by it self were more perfect than the thing which tends to it, but that every thing with its *Operation* is more perfect than without it.

The next thing which I observe, is, that 'tis also farther agreed upon among them, that this *Operation* wherein our Fruition of God does consist, is an *Operation* of the *Intellectual* part, and not of the *Sensitive*. And this also I take to be very reasonable. First, because 'tis generally receiv'd that the Essence of God cannot be the Object of any of our Senses.

Senses. But Secondly, Suppose it could, yet since this Operation wherein our *perfect Happiness* does consist must be the perfectest Operation, and since that of the *Intellectual* part is more perfect than that of the *Sensitive*, it follows that the Operation whereby we enjoy God must be that of the *Intellectual* part only.

But now whereas the *Intellectual* part of man (as 'tis opposed to the *Sensitive*) is double, *viz.* That of the *Understanding*, and that of the *Will*, there has commenced a great Controversy between the *Thomists* and the *Scotists*, in which Act or Operation of the *Rational Soul* the *Fruition* of God does consist, whether in an Act of the *Understanding*, or in an Act of the *Will*. The *Thomists* will have it consist purely in an Act of the *Understanding*, which is *Vision*. The *Scotists* in Act of the *Will*, which is *Love*. I intend not here to launch out into those *Voluminous Intricacies* and *Abstrusities*, occasioned by the management of this Argument: It may suffice to tell you, that I think they are both in the extream, and therefore I shall take the middle way and resolve the perfect Fruition of God partly into *Vision* and partly into *Love*. These are the two arms with which we embrace the Divinity, and unite our Souls to the *fair one*
and

and the *good*. These I conceive are both so *essential* to the perfect *Fruition* of God, that the *Idea* of it can by no means be maintained if either of them be wanting. For, *since* God is both *Supream Truth* and infinite *Goodness*, he cannot be intirely possess'd but by the most clear *knowledge* and the most ardent *love*. And besides, since the Soul is happy by her *Faculties*, her *Happiness* must consist in the most perfect *Operation* of each *Faculty*. For if *Happiness* did consist formally in the sole *Operation* of the *Understanding* (as most say) or in the sole *Operation* of the *Will* (as others) the Man would not be compleatly and in all respects *Happy*. For how is it possible a Man should be perfectly *Happy* in loving the greatest good if he did not know it, or in knowing it if he did not love it? And moreover, these two *Operations* do so mutually tend to the promotion and conservation of one another, that upon this depends the perpetuity and the constancy of our *Happiness*. For while the Blessed do *ὡς ὡς πρὸς ὡς πρὸς*, Face to Face contemplate the *Supream Truth* and the infinite *Goodness*, they cannot chuse but love perpetually; and while they perpetually love, they cannot chuse but perpetually contemplate. And in this mutual re-

ciprocation of the Actions of the Soul consists the *perpetuity* of Heaven, the *Circle* of Felicity.

Besides this way of resolving our *fruition* of God into *Vision* and *Love*, there is a Famous Opinion said to be *broacht* by *Henricus Gandavensis*, who, upon a Supposition that God could not be so fully enjoy'd as is required to perfect Happiness, only by the *Operations* or *Powers* of the Soul, fancied a certain *Illapse* whereby the *Divine Essence* did fall in with, and as it were penetrate the *Essence* of the Blessed. Which Opinion he endeavours to illustrate by this Similitude. That as a piece of Iron, red hot by reason of the *Illapse* of the fire into it, appears all over like fire, so the Souls of the Blessed by this *Illapse* of the *Divine Essence* into them, shall be all over *Divine*.

I think he has scarce any *followers* in this Opinion, but I am sure he had a *leader*. For this is no more than what *Plato* taught before him, as is to be seen in his Discourses about the *refusion* of the Souls of good men into the *Anima Mundi*, which is the self-same in other terms with this Opinion. And the Truth of what I affirm may farther appear from an expressi-
on of that great *Platonist Plotinus*, (*viz.*) that
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the Soul will then be Happy when it shall depart hence to God, and as another and no longer her self shall become wholly his, *ἐαυτὴν αὐτῷ ὡς πρὸς κέντρον κέντρον συνδράς*, having joyn'd her self to him as a Center to a Center.

Enn. 6. lib.
9. cap. 10.

That such an intimate *Conjunction* with God as is here described is possible, seems to me more than credible from the Nature of the *Hypostatic Union*, but whether our *Fruition* of God after this Life shall consist in it, none know but those happy Souls who enjoy him, and therefore I shall determine nothing before the time. This only I observe, that should our *Fruition* of God consist in such an Union or rather *Penetration* of *Essences*, that would not exclude but rather infer those Operations of *Vision* and *Love* as necessary to *Fruition*; but on the other hand, there seems no such necessity of this Union to the *Fruition*, but that it may be conceiv'd intire without it. And therefore why we should multiply difficulties without cause, I see no reason. For my part I should think my self sufficiently happy in the clear *Vision* of my Maker, nor should I desire any thing beyond the Prayer of *Moses*, *I beseech thee shew me thy Glory.*

Exod. 33.
18.

For

For what an infinite Satisfaction, Happiness, and Delight must it needs be to have a clear and intimate perception of that Primitive and Original Beauty, Perfection and Harmony, whereof all that appears fair and excellent either to our *Senses* or *Understandings* in this Life is but a faint imitation, a pale Reflection! To see him who is the Fountain of all Being, containing in himself the perfection, not only of all that is, but of all that is possible to be, *the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, the first and the last, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty!* To see him of ^{Rev. 1. 8.} whom all Nature is the *Image*, of whom all the Harmony both of the visible and invisible World is but the *Eccho*! To see him, who (as *Plato* divinely and magnificently expresses it) is πολὺ πέλαιος τῷ καλῷ αὐτοῦ καὶ αὐτὸ μεθ' αὐτοῦ μοιροειδὲς αἰεὶ ὄν. The immense Ocean of Beauty, which is it self by it self, with it self, uniform, alwayes existing! This certainly will affect the Soul with all the pleasing and ravishing Transports of Love and Desire, Joy and Delight, Wonder and Amazement, together with a settled Acquiescence and Complacency of Spirit only less infinite than the *Loveliness* that causes it, and the peculiar Complacency of him

him who rejoices in his own fulness, and the *Comprehensions* of Eternity. We see how strangely our Sense of *Seeing* is affected with the Harmony of *Colours*, and our sense of Hearing with the Harmony of Sounds, inso-much that some have been too *weak* for the enjoyment, and have grown mad with the *Sublimate* of Pleasure. And if so, what then shall we think of the *Beatific Vision*, the pleasure of which will so far transcend that of the other, as God who is all over Harmony and Proportion exceeds the sweetest Melody of Sounds and Colours, and the perception of the Mind is more vigorous, quick and piercing than that of the Senses? This is *perfect Happiness*, this is the Tree of Life which grows in the *midst* of the *Paradise* of God, this is Heaven, which while the Learned dispute about, the Good only enjoy. But I shall not venture to Soar any longer in these Heights, I find the *Æther* too thin here to breath in long, and the Brightness of the Region flashes too strong upon my tender Sense; I shall therefore hasten to descend from the Mount of God, lest I grow *giddy* with speculation, and lose those Secrets which I have learnt there, the *Cabala* of Felicity.

And

And now, (Sir) I come to consider your Question (*viz.*) Wherein the greatest Happiness attainable by Man in this Life does consist. Concerning which, there is as great variety of Opinions among *Philosophers*, as there is among *Geographers* about the Seat of *Paradise*. The Learned *Varro* reckons up no less than 288 several Opinions about it, and yet notwithstanding the number of Writers who have bequeath'd Volumes upon this Subject to Posterity, they seem to have been in the dark in nothing more than in this, and (excepting only a few *Platonists*, who placed Man's greatest End in the Contemplation of Truth) they seem to have undertaken nothing so *unhappily*, as when they essay'd to write of *Happiness*. Some measure their *Happiness* by the high-tide of their Riches, as the *Egyptians* did the Fertility of the Year by the increase of the River *Nile*. Others place it in the Pleasures of Sense, others in Honour and Greatness. But these and the like were Men of the common Herd, low groveling Souls, that either *understood* not the *Dignity* of Humane Nature, or else *forgot* that they were Men. But there were others of a *Diviner Genius and Sublimier Spirit*,

Quæis meliore luto finxit præcordia Titan.

Who

Who had a more generous blood running in their Veins, which made them put a just value upon themselves, and scorn to place their greatest *Happiness* in that which they should blush to enjoy. And those were the *Stoics* and the *Peripatetics*, who both place the greatest *Happiness* of this Life in the Actions of Vertue, with this only difference, that whereas the former are contented with *Naked Vertue*, the latter require some other *Collateral* things to the farther *accomplishment* of *Happiness*, such as are Health and Strength of Body, a Competent Lively-hood, and the like.

And this Opinion has been subscribed to by the hands of eminent *Moralists* in all Ages. And as it is Venerable for its Antiquity, so has it gain'd no small Authority from the Pen of a great Modern Writer (*Descartes*) who resolves the greatest *Happiness* of this Life into the right use of the *Will*, which consists in this, that a Man have a firm and constant purpose always to do that which he shall judge to be best.

I confess, the Practice of Vertue is a very great instrument of *Happiness*, and that there is a great deal more true satisfaction and solid content to be found in a constant course of well living, than in all the soft Caresses of the

the most *studied* Luxury, or the Voluptuousness of a *Seraglio*. And therefore I have oftentimes been exceedingly pleased in the reading of a certain Passage in that Divine Moralist *Hierocles*, where he tells you, that the Vertuous Man lives much more pleasantly than the Vicious Man. For (says he) all Pleasure is the Companion of Action, it has no Subsistence of its own, but accompanies us in our doing such and such things. Hence 'tis that the worse Actions are accompanied with the meaner Pleasures. So that the good Man does not only excell the wicked Man in what is good, but has also the advantage of him even in Pleasure, for whose sake alone he is wicked. For he that chuses Pleasure with Filthiness, altho for a while he be sweetly and deliciously entertain'd, yet at last through the Filthiness, annexed to his Enjoyment, he is brought to a painful Repentance. But now he that prefers Vertue with all her Labours and Difficulties, though at first for want of use it sits heavy upon him, yet by the Conjunction of good he alleviates the Labour, and at last enjoys pure and unallay'd Pleasure with his Vertue. So that of necessity that Life is most unhappy, which is most wicked, and that most pleasant which is most vertuous.

Now

Now this I readily submit to as a great truth, that the degrees of *Happiness* vary according to the degrees of *Vertue*, and consequently that that Life which is most *Vertuous* is most *Happy*, with reference to those that are Vicious or less *Vertuous*, every degree of *Vertue* having a proportionate degree of *Happiness* accompanying it, (which is all, I suppose, that excellent Author intends.) But I do not think the most *Vertuous* Life so the most *Happy*, but that it may become *Happier*, unless something more be comprehended in the Word (*Vertue*) than the *Stoics*, *Peripatetics*, and the generality of other Moralists understand by it. For with them it signifies no more but only such a firm *exer*cise or habitude of the Will to good, whereby we are constantly disposed, notwithstanding the contrary tendency of our Passions, to perform the necessary Offices of Life. This they call *Moral* or *Civil* *Vertue*, and although this brings always *Happiness* enough with it to make ample amends for all the difficulties which attend the practise of it: Yet I am not of Opinion that the greatest *Happiness* attainable by Man in this Life consists in it. But there is another and a higher Sense of the Word, which frequently occurs in the *Pythagorean* and

and *Platonic Writings*, (*viz.*) *Contemplation* and the *Unitive* way of Religion. And this they call *Divine Vertue*. I allow of the distinction, but I would not be thought to derive it from the *Principle*, as if Moral Vertue were *acquired*, and this *infused* (for to speak ingeniously, infused Vertue seem'd ever to me as great a *Paradox* in *Divinity*, as Occult qualities in *Philosophy*) but from the nobleness of the Object, the Object of the former being Moral good, and the Object of the latter God himself. The former is a State of *Proficiency*, the latter of *Perfection*. The former is a State of difficulty and contention, the latter of ease and serenity. The former is employ'd in mastering the Passions, and regulating the actions of common Life, the latter in Divine Meditation and the Extasies of *Seraphic Love*. He that has only the former, is like *Moses* with much difficulty climbing up to the Holy Mount, but he that has the latter, is like the same Person conversing with God on the serene top of it, and shining with the Rays of *anticipated Glory*. So that this latter supposes the acquisition of the former, and consequently has all the *Happiness* retaining to the other, besides what it adds of its own. This is the last *Stage* of
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Humane Perfection, the utmost round of the Ladder whereby we ascend to *Heaven*, one Step higher is *Glory*. Here then will I build my *Tabernacle*, for it is good to be here. Here will I set up my Pillar of Rest, here will I fix, for why should I travel on farther in pursuit of any greater *Happiness*, since Man in this Station is but a little lower than the *Angels*, one remove from *Heaven*. Here certainly is the greatest happiness, as well as *Perfection* attainable by Man in this State of imperfection. For since that *Happiness* which is absolutely perfect and compleat consists in the clear and intimate *Vision* and most ardent *Love* of God, hence we ought to take our Measures, and conclude that to be the greatest *Happiness* attainable in this State, which is the greatest participation of the other. And that can be nothing else but the *Unitive* way of Religion, which consists of the *Contemplation* and *Love* of God. I shall say something of each of these severally, and something of the *Unitive* way of Religion, which is the result of both, and so shut up this Discourse.

By *Contemplation* in general (*Iwe* α) we understand an application of the *Understanding* to some truth. But here in this place we take the word in a more peculiar sence, as it

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signifies

signifies an habitual, attentive, steddy application or conversion of the Spirit to God and his Divine Perfections. Of this the Masters of *Mystic Theology* commonly make fifteen Degrees. The first is Intuition of Truth, the second is a Retirement of all the Vigour and Strength of the Faculties into the innermost parts of the Soul, the third is Spiritual Silence, the fourth is Rest, the fifth is Union, the sixth is the Hearing of the still Voice of God, the seventh is Spiritual Slumber, the eighth is Ecstasy, the ninth is Rapture, the tenth is the Corporeal Appearance of Christ and the Saints, the eleventh is the Imaginary Appearance of the Same, the twelfth is the Intellectual Vision of God, the thirteenth is the Vision of God in Obscurity, the fourteenth is an admirable Manifestation of God, the fifteenth is a clear and intuitive Vision of him, such as St. *Austin* and *Tho. Aquinas* attribute to St. *Paul*, when he was rapt up into the third Heaven. Others of them reckon seven degrees only, (*viz.*) Taste, Desire, Satiety, Ebriety, Security, Tranquility, but the name of the seventh (they say) is known only to God.

I shall not stand to examine the *Scale* of this Division, perhaps there may be a kind
of

of a *Pythagoric* Superstition in the number. But this I think I may affirm in general, that the Soul may be wound up to a most strange degree of *Abstraction* by a silent and steddý *Contemplation* of God. *Plato* defines *Contemplation* to be λύσις καὶ χωρismus τῆς ψυχῆς ἀπὸ σώματος, a Solution and a Separation of the Soul from the Body. And some of the severer *Platonists* have been of Opinion, that 'tis possible for a Man by mere *intention* of thought not only to withdraw the Soul from all commerce with the Senses, but even really to separate it from the Body, to untwist the Ligaments of his Frame, and by degrees to resolve himself into the State of the Dead. And thus the *Jews* express the manner of the Death of *Moses*, calling it *Osculum Oris Dei*, the Kiss of God's Mouth. That is, that he breath'd out his Soul by the mere Strength and Energy of *Contemplation*, and expired in the Embraces of his Maker. A Happy way of Dying! How ambitious should I be of such a conveyance, were it practicable? How passionately should I joyn with the Church in the Canticles? φιλησάτω με ἀπὸ φιλημάτων σώματος αὐτοῦ, Let him Kiss me with the Kisses of his Mouth. Cant. 1 Ver. 2.

But however this be determin'd, certain it is, that there are exceeding great Measures of *Abstraction* in *Contemplation*, so great, that sometimes whether a Man be in the Body or out of the Body, he himself can hardly tell. And consequently the Soul in these *Præludiums* of Death, these *Neighbourhoods* of Separation, must needs have *brighter* glimpses, and more *Beatifick Ideas* of God, than in a state void of these *Elevations*, and consequently must love him with greater Ardency. Which is the next thing I am to consider.

The love of God in general may be considered either as it is purely *intellectual*, or as it is a *Passion*. The first is, when the Soul, upon an apprehension of God as a good, delectable, and agreeable Object, joyns her self to him by the Will. The latter is, when the motion of the Will is accompany'd with a sensible Commotion of the Spirits, and an estuation of the Blood. Some I know are of Opinion, that 'tis not possible for a man to be affected with this sensitive Love of God, which is a *Passion*, because there is nothing in God which falls under our imagination, and consequently (the imagination being the only Medium of conveyance) it cannot be propagated from the Intellectual
part

part to the Sensitive. Whereupon they affirm, that none are capable of this sensitive passionate Love of God but Christians, who enjoy the *Mystery* of the *Incarnation*, whereby they know God has condescended so far as to cloath himself with Flesh, and to become like one of us. But 'tis not all the *Sophistry* of the cold *Logicians* that shall work me out of the belief of what I feel and know, and rob me of the sweetest entertainment of my Life, the *Passionate Love of God*. Whatever some Men pretend, who are Strangers to all the affectionate heats of Religion, and therefore make their Philosophy a Plea for their indevotion, and extinguish all Holy Ardours with a *Syllogism*; yet I am firmly persuaded, that our love of God may be not only passionate, but even *Wondersfully* so; and *exceeding the Love of Women*. 'Tis an *Experimental* and therefore *undeniable* Truth, that *Passion* is a great Instrument of *Devotion*, and accordingly we find, that Men of the most warm and pathetick *Temper*s and *Amorous Complexions* (Provided they have but Consideration enough withall to fix upon the right *Object*) prove the greatest *Votaries* in *Religion*. And upon this account it is, that to heighten our Love of God in our Religi-

ous *Addresses*, we endeavour to excite our Passions by *Musick*, which would be to as little purpose as the *Fanatic* thinks 'tis, if there were not such a thing as the *Passionate Love of God*. But then as to the *Objection*, I Answer with the excellent *Descartes*, that although in God who is the *Object* of our *Love*, we can *imagine* nothing, yet we can *imagine* that our *Love*, which consists in this, that we would unite our *selves* to the *Object* beloved, and consider our *selves* as it were a part of it. And the sole *Idea* of this very Conjunction is enough to stir up a heat about the Heart, and so kindle a very *vehement Passion*. To which I add, that although the *Beauty* or *Amiability* of God be not the same with that which we see in *Corporeal Beings*, and consequently cannot *directly* fall within the *Sphere* of the imagination, yet it is something *Analogous* to it, and that very *Analogy* is enough to excite a *Passion*. And this I think sufficient to warrant my general division of the *Love of God* into *Intellectual* and *Sensitive*.

But there is a more *peculiar Acceptation* of the *Love of God* proper to this place. And it is that which we call *Seraphic*. By which I understand in short, that *Love of God* which
is

is the effect of an intense *Contemplation* of him. This differs not from the other in kind, but only in *degree*, and that it does *exceedingly*, in as much as the thoughtful *Contemplative Man* (as I hinted before) has *clearer Perceptions* and *livelier Impressions* of the *Divine Beauty*, the lovely *Attributes* and *Perfection* of God, than he whose Soul is more deeply *set* in the *Flesh*, and lies groveling in the *bottom* of the *Dungeon*.

That the nature of this *Seraphic Love* may be the better understood, I shall consider how many *degrees* there may be in the *Love* of God. And I think the *Computation* of *Bellarmin*, lib. 2. de *monachis*, cap. 2. is *accurate* enough. He makes four. The first is to *love* God proportionably to his *Loveliness*, that is, with an *infinite Love*; and this *degree* is peculiar to God himself. The second is to *Love* him, not proportionably to his *Loveliness*, but to the utmost *Capacity* of a *Creature*, and this *degree* is peculiar to Saints and Angels in *Heaven*. The third is to *love* him not proportionably to his *Loveliness*, nor to the utmost capacity of a *Creature*, absolutely consider'd, but to the utmost capacity of a *Mortal Creature*.

ture in this Life. And this (he says) is proper to the *Religious*. The fourth is to love him not proportionably to his *Loveliness*, nor to the utmost capacity of a *Creature*, consider'd either absolutely or with respect to this *Life*, but only so as to love nothing equally with him or above him. That is, not to do any thing contrary to the *Divine Love*. And this is absolute indispensable duty, less than which will not qualify us for the *enjoyment* of God hereafter.

Now this *Seraphic Love* which we here discourse of is in the third degree: When a Man, after many *degrees* of *Abstraction* from the *Animal Life*, many a profound and steady Meditation upon the *Excellencies* of God, sees such a vast *Ocean* of *Beauty* and *Perfection* in him, that he loves him to the utmost stretch of his Power; *When he sits under his shadow with great delight, and his fruit is sweet to his Taste.* Cant. 2. 3. When he *Consecrates* and *Devotes* himself wholly to him, and has no Passion for Inferiour *Objects*. When he is ravished with the *delights* of his *Service*, and breaths out some of his Soul to him in every Prayer. When he is delighted with *Anthems* of Praise and Adoration more than with
Marrow

Marrow and Fatness, and Feasts upon Alleluiah. When he melts in a *Calenture of Devotion*, and his *Soul breaketh out with fervent Desire*. Psal. 119. When the one thing he *delights in* is to converse with God in the *Beauty of Holiness*, and the one thing he *desires to see him as he is in Heaven*. This is *Seraphic Love*, and this with *Contemplation* makes up that which the *Mystic Divines* stile the *Unitive way of Religion*: It is called so because it *Unites us to God in the most excellent manner* that we are capable of in this *Life*. By *Union* here I do not understand that which is *local* or *presential*, because I consider God as *Omnipresent*. Neither do I mean a *Union of Grace* (as they call it) whereby we are *reconciled to God*, or a *Union of Charity*, whereof it is said, *he that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God and God in him*. Jo. 4. 16. The first of these being as common to the inanimate things as to the most *Extasid Soul upon Earth*. And the two last being common to all good men, who indeed love God, but yet want the *excellency of Contemplation* and the *Mystic Union*. The *Union* then which I here speak of, is that which is between the *Faculty* and the *Object*.

ject. Which consists in some Habitude or Operation of one toward the *other*. The *Faculties* here are the *Understanding* and *Will*, the *Object* God, and the *Operations* *Contemplation* and *Love*. The result of which two is the *Mystic Union*. Which, according to his *complex* Notion of it that I have here delivered, is thus most admirably represented by the excellent

The great
Exemplar,
pag. 60.

Bishop *Taylor*. It is (says he) a Prayer of quietness and silence, and a Meditation extraordinary, a Discourse without variety, a Vision and Intuition of Divine Excellencies, an immediate entry into an Orb of light, and a resolution of all our Faculties into Sweetness, Affections, and Starings upon the Divine Beauty. And is carried on to Extasies, Raptures, Suspensions, Elevations, Abstractions and Apprehensions beatifical.

I make no doubt but that many an honest Pious Soul arrives to the heavenly *Canaan*, who is not fed with this *Manna* in the *Wilderness*. But though every one must not expect these *Antepasts* of Felicity that is vertuous, yet none else must. *Paradise* was never open but to a State of *Innocence*. But neither is that enough. No, this Mount of
God's

God's Presence is fenced not only from the *profane*, but also from the *moderately* virtuous. 'Tis the Priviledge of Angelical Dispositions, and the Reward of *eminent* Piety and an excellent Religion, to be admitted to these *Divine Repasts*, these Feasts of *love*. And here I place the greatest Happiness attainable by Man in this Life, as being the nearest Approach to the State of the Blessed above, the *outer Court* of Heaven.

These (Sir) are my thoughts concerning Happiness. I might have *spun* them out into a greater length, but I think a little Plot of ground *thick-sown* is better than a great Field which for the most part of it lies Fallow. I have endeavour'd to deliver my Notions with as much Perspicuity and in as good Method as I could, and so to answer all the ends of *Copiousness*, with the advantage of a shorter Cut. If I appear singular in any of my Notions, 'tis not out of an industrious affectation of Novelty, but because in the composing of this discourse (the Meditation of a few broken hours in a Garden) I consulted more my own experimental Notices of things and private *Reflections* than the Writings of others. So that if sometimes I
happen

happen to be in the Road, and sometimes in
a way by my self, 'tis no wonder. I affect
neither the one nor the other, but write
as I think. Which as I do at other times,
so more especially when I subscribe my
self

S I R,

Yours most affectionately,

All-Souls Colledge
Apr. 18. 1683.

J. N.

A

A Letter of Resolution concerning some Passages in the foregoing Treatise, to the same Person.

S I R,

TH E kind Entertainment which you gave my *Idea of Happiness*, does not only *incourage*, but *oblige* me to endeavour the satisfaction of that Scruple, which the Perusal of it has occasion'd. I cannot but highly commend your *searching* Curiosity, in desiring farther satisfaction concerning a matter of so sublime and excellent a Nature (for the Tree of Paradise is *good for food, pleasant to the Eye, and a Tree to be desired to make one wise*) tho you must give me leave to wonder that you would not *inquire* at a better Oracle. But since you are *pleas'd* to be of the Opinion, that few have made this Subject so *familiar* to their Meditation as I have, I cannot with any pretence decline your Request, tho perhaps by my performing

ing it I shall work you into a contrary persuasion.

Sir, You say you should like my Notion concerning the *reality* of that which is usually call'd *Imaginary Happiness*, that is, (as you well explain both your own and my meaning) that although the *Object* may be an *Imaginary Good*, yet the *Happiness* which consists in the Fruition of that Object, will not be *Imaginary too*, but *real*, and consequently, that 'tis impossible for a man to *seem* to himself to be happy, and not to *be really* so, all Happiness consisting in *Opinion*. This Notion, you say, you should like rarely well, could you free your self from one difficulty which it engages you upon ; (*viz.*) That hereafter, in the state of Glory, either one Saint shall think himself as happy as another, or not ; if not, this must needs occasion Envy or Discontent, but if one shall think himself as happy as another, then, according to my *Hypothesis*, that *Opinion* is the *Measure of Happiness*, 'twill follow that he will really be so ; and this brings in *Equality* of Happiness, which you look upon (and I think justly too) as another absurdity.

I confess, Sir, this Argument is pretty subtle and surprizing, but I conceive the
Knots

Knots of it may be untied by this Answer. First, it may be justly question'd, whether the first part of your *Dilemma* be necessarily attended with the appendant absurdity. 'Tis true indeed, not to think ones self as happy as another, is the Spring of Envy or Discontent among Men in this World, but whether this be the *genuin* and *constant* effect of that Consideration, or whether it ought not rather to be ascribed to the present Infirmities and Imperfections of Human Nature, may admit Dispute. But in case this absurdity does inseparably cleave to the first part, then I betake my self to the latter, and affirm, that in Heaven one Saint shall think himself as happy as another. Then, according to my own Notion (*say you*) it will follow that he *is really* so. No, I deny the consequence, the invalidity of which will plainly appear by distinguishing the ambiguity of the *Phrase*. For this Expression, *One Saint thinks himself as happy as another*, may be taken in a double sense, either that he thinks himself as happy as he himself thinks that other, or that he thinks himself as happy as that other thinks himself. I grant, should one Saint think himself as happy as another in this latter sense of the *Phrase*, he would, accor-

according to my *Hypothesis*, really be so; so that this would bring in equality. And therefore in this Sense I deny the Proposition, and that without the least danger of splitting upon the first absurdity. But for the former Sense, *that* has no such *levelling* quality, for to say that I think my self as happy as I think another, amounts to no more than this, that in my apprehension another does not exceed me in Happiness: But tho he does not in *my apprehension*, yet he may in *reality*, for tho my Opinion gives measures to my *own* Happiness, yet it does not to *another* Mans. So that one Saint may be said to think himself as happy as another in the former sense, without equalling the Happiness of the Blessed, tho, I confess, I should much rather adhere to the contrary proposition, (*viz.*) that *one shall not think himself as happy as another*, in case such an Opinion be not necessarily attended with *Envy* or *Discontent*. Because it seems unreasonable to make them ignorant of the degrees of one anothers Bliss, unless that ignorance be necessarily required to prevent the alledg'd absurdities. But I *determin* nothing in this point, my business was only to break the force of your *Dilemma*, and to shew that my Notion does not involve you in the difficulty

difficulty supposed. This, Sir, is all that I think necessary to say to a Person of your apprehension, and therefore I end these nice Speculations with this profitable reflection, that altho the *Notion* of Happiness be *intricate* and *obscure*, yet the *means* of attaining it are *plain*, and therefore 'twould be most advisable both for you and me *chiefly* to apply ourselves to the *latter here*, and we shall understand the *former* with the best sort of Knowledge, that of *Experience*, hereafter.

Yours

J. N.

K

Ano-

*Another Letter to the same Person,
concerning the true Notion of
Plato's Ideas, and of Platonic
Love.*

S I R,

WERE I not as well acquainted with your singular *modesty*, as I am with your *intellectual* accomplishments, I should readily conclude, that your directing your inquiries to *me* proceeded not so much from a Curiosity to *improve* your *own* Knowledge, as to *try mine*. But when I consider that you are ignorant of nothing so much as of your own Worth and Abilities, I begin to think it possible that you may propose these *Questions* even to *me* out of a desire to be *inform'd*. Which way so ever it is, I acknowledge my self to be obliged to you for affording me an opportunity of serving you, especially in such an Instance, where I cannot gratify your Request without *humouring* my own *Genius* at the same time. For indeed to my apprehension, there

is not a finer or more Sublime piece of Speculation in all *Plato's Philosophy*, than that of his *Ideas* and that of his *Love*, tho it has undergone the same hard Fate with many other excellent *Theories*, first, to be either *ignorantly misunderstood*, or *maliciously misrepresented*, and then *popularly vilify'd* and *decry'd*.

To do right therefore to the name of this great Man, as well as to satisfy your Demands, I shall first *propose* the general mistake, and then *rectify* it, first present you with the *suppos'd* Opinion of *Plato*, and then with the *true* and *genuine* one. I begin with his *Ideas*, by which 'tis taken for granted by the *generality* of Writers, especially those of the *Peripatetic Order*, that he understood *universal* Natures or abstract Essences subsisting eternally by themselves, Separate both from the mind of God and all singular Beings, according to which; as so many *patterns*, all Singulars are form'd. As for instance, that a Bull, not this or that *in particular*, but a *universal* Bull, or a Bull in general, should exist by it self eternally, according to which all particular Bulls were made. Sir, I suppose you can hardly forbear smiling at the odness of the Conceit, but as ridiculous as you may

think it, 'tis said to be maintained by no less a Man than *Plato*, and has been thought of that *moment* too, that *Multitudes* of great Men have set themselves very *seriously* to confute it as a dangerous Herefy, and have opposed it with as much zeal as ever *St. Austin* did the *Manichees* or the *Pelagians*.

But now, that this Opinion was not only for its Absurdity and Contradictionousness unworthy of the contemplative and refin'd Spirit of *Plato*; but was also apparently none of his, I dare say any capable Person will be convinc'd that shall heedfully and impartially *examin* and *compare* the Works of *Plato*; And this *Aristotle* himself must needs have known (he having been his constant Auditour for twenty years together) but only he wanted a Shadow to fight with, and so father'd this monstrous Opinion upon his Master. And of this disingenuity of *Aristotle*, together with other abuses, *Plato* himself complain'd, while alive, in these words; Ἀριστοτέλης ἡμᾶς ἀπελά-
κτισι καὶ ἀπερὶ τὰ πωλὺ ὅσα ἔχουσιντα τὴν μη-
τιν, as is recorded by *Laertius* in the Life of *Aristotle*.

And now, that the grossness of this Abuse may the more fully appear, I will in the next place present you with another Sense of *Pla-*

to's *Ideas*, and such as by a more than ordinary acquaintance with his Works, I know to be the *true* and *genuin* one. Know then that *Plato* considering the World as an effect of an *intellectual* Agent, and that in the Operations of all other *Artificers* or rational *Efficients* there must be some form in the Mind of the *Artificer* presupposed to the Work (for otherwise what difference will there be between a *fortuitous* effect and an *intended* one, and how comes the effect to be of *this* Species rather than *another*?) thought it necessary to suppose *αἰώνια ἰδέαι*, *Eternal Forms*, Models or Patterns, of all the Species of being in Nature existing in the Mind of God. And these he calls *Ideas*. I say existing in the Mind of God, for there is not the least Intimation in all *Plato's* Works of any such *Ideas* existing *separately* from the Divine intellect, nor do the great Masters of *Platonic Philosophy*, *Plotinus*, *Porphyrus*, *Procles*, or any other that I know of make mention of any such *Spectres* and *Ghosts* of Entity: No, this Monster was hatch'd in *Aristotle's* Brain, and I believe did never enter *Plato's* Head so much as in a Dream. For he is not only silent about it, but does in several places expressly assert the contrary; Particularly in his *Timæus*, where, of set purpose, he describes the

Origin of the World, he says that God made the World according to that Pattern or *Idea* which he had in his Mind. The same you will find more amply confirm'd in his *Hippias*, his *Parmenides*, and his sixth Book of *Repub.* and many other places. And these *Ideas* he calls τὰ πρῶτα νοῦτα, the first Intelligibles, and τῶν ὄντων μέτρα, the Measures of the things that are, implying, that as all things were form'd according to these specific Plat-forms; so their truth must be measur'd from their Conformity to them. And in this Sense must be taken that Common Axiom of the Schools, that *the Truth of a thing is its Conformity with the Divine Intellect*, for it is in no other Sense Intelligible, as you will discern in the Process.

But now, lest you should imagine, that this *Platonic Hypothesis* of *Ideas* existing in the Divine Mind should ill comport with the Simplicity of God, or clash with that approved Doctrin of the Schools, *Nihil est in Deo quod non sit deus*, (which is another cavil of the *Anti-platonists*) you are to understand that *Plato* by his *Ideas* does not mean any real Essence distinct from the Divine Essence, but only the Divine Essence it self with this *Connotation*, as it is variously imitable or participable by created Beings, and consequently, according to the *multifariousness*

ness of this imitability, so are the *possibilities* of Being. Which is as fine a Notion as was ever framed by the Mind of Man, and that it is his, you will find, if you consult his *Parmenides*. And this will serve to help us out with another difficulty, for whereas *Plato* makes his *Divine Ideas* not only the *exemplary* causes of things, but also (which is a consequent to the former) the measure of their Truth, this may seem to fall in with their Opinion who make all *Truth* dependent upon the Speculative understanding of God, that is, that God does not understand a thing so because it is so in its own Nature, but that a thing is therefore so because God is *pleas'd* so to understand it. Which is an Opinion full of mischief and absurdity, as you may see compendiously, and yet evidently demonstrated, in Dr. *Russ's* little *Discourse of Truth*. Now for the clearing this Difficulty, 'tis to be observed, that the Essence of God, according to *Plato*, is distinguished into *ὅς* *νοεῖς* and *ὅς* *νοητός*, the Counterpart whereof in English is *Conceptive* and *Exhibitive*. By the Mind of God *Exhibitive* is meant the Essence of God as thus or thus imitable or participable by any Creature, and this is the same with an *Idea*. By the Mind of God *Conceptive* is meant a reflex act of God's Under-

derstanding upon his own Essence as *exhibitive*, or as thus and thus imitable. Now if you consider the Divine Understanding as *Conceptive* or *Speculative*, it does not *make* its Object but suppose it, (as all *Speculative* Understanding does) neither is the Truth of the Object to be measured from its Conformity with *that*, but the Truth of *that* from its Conformity with its Object. But if you consider the Divine Understanding as *Exhibitive*, then its Truth does not depend upon its Conformity with the Nature of things, but on the contrary, the Truth of the Nature of things depends upon its Conformity with it. For the Divine Essence is not thus or thus imitable, because such and such things are in being, but such and such things are in being, because the Divine Essence is thus and thus imitable, for had not the Divine Essence been thus imitable, such and such Beings would not have been *possible*. And thus is *Plato* to be understood when he founds the Truth of things upon their Conformity with the *Divine Ideas*, and thus must the Schools mean too by that foremention'd *Axiom* concerning *Transcendental Truth*, if they will speak Sense, as I noted above.

And now, Sir, from *Plato's* Ideas thus amiably set forth, the *Transition* methinks is very natural

natural to *Love*. And concerning this I shall account in the same Method, first, by pointing out the popular Misapprehensions about it, and then by exhibiting a true Notion of it. *Platonick Love* is a thing in every bodies Mouth, but I find scarce any that think or speak accurately of it. The mistakes which I observe are chiefly these. Some of the grosser Understanders suppose that *Plato* by his *Love* meant *παρθενία*, the *Love of Males*, but the Occasion of this Conceit was from a passage in his *Convivium*, where he brings in *Aristophanes* speaking favourably that way. But he that shall from hence conclude *Plato* a prostitute to that vile Passion, may as well conclude a *Dramatic Poet* to be an *Atheist* or a *Whore-master*, because he represents those of that Character. But that Divine *Plato* intended nothing less than to countenance any such thing, is evident from the whole scope and purport of that *Dialogue*, and from other places where he expressly condemns it, and rejects it with great abhorrence; particularly in the first of his *de legibus*, where he calls it τὸ ἐξ ἁφ' φύσιν τέλημα, an *unnatural attempt*. Others by *Platonic Love* understand the *Love of Souls*, and this indeed has something of truth

truth in it, only it is much too narrow and particular.

Others take *Platonic Love* to be a desire of imprinting any excellency, whether moral or intellectual, in the Minds of beautiful young men by Instruction, and so likewise of enjoying your own Perfections reflected from the Mind of another, mix'd *with* and recommended *by* the Beauty of the Body. According to the usual saying, *Gratior è Pulchro, &c.* And thus *Socrates* was said to love his beautiful Pupils *Phædrus* and *Alcibiades*. Others measure the Nature of *Platonic Love*, not from the *Object* (to which they suppose it indifferent) but from the *manner* of the *Act*. And according to these, that man is said to love *Platonically*, that does *Casso delectamine amare*, love at a distance, that never designs a *close* fruition of the *Object* what ever it be, whether Sensual or Intellectual, but chooses to dwell in the *Suburbs*, pleasing himself with remote Prospects, and makes a *Mistress* of his own *Desire*. And this is the receiv'd Notion, and that which People generally mean when they talk of *Platonic Love*. But this too is far enough from the right, for tho *Platonic love* does not aim at the fruition of sensual Objects, yet it designs the fruition of its own *Object* as much as any other Love does. That there-

therefore which distinguishes *Platonick love*, is not the *manner* of the act above-mention'd, but the peculiarity of the *Object*. And what that is must be collected from the *Design* of *Plato* in that *Dialogue*, where he treats purposely of it, his *Convivium*. Which is briefly to shew the manner of the Souls ascent to God by love. For *Plato* makes the Happiness of Man to consist in the Contemplation and Love of God, whom he calls the *Idea* of *Beauty*. But now because this *Idea* of *Beauty* (God) is of too sublime and refined excellency to be immediately fastned upon by our Love, he recommends to us μέθοδος ἀνόδου, a *Method of Ascent*, which is from loving the Beauty we see in Bodies, to pass on to the Love of the Beauty of the Soul, from the Beauty of the Soul to the Beauty of Vertue, and lastly from the Beauty of Vertue, ἐπὶ τὸ πολὺ πηλαγὸν τῆς καλῆς αὐτὸ τὸ ἀγαθὸν τὸ ἐρετὸν καὶ ἐφελτόν, to the immense *Ocean of Beauty*, &c. For so have I observ'd a tender Infants Eye not enduring to gaze directly upon the too powerful Excellence of the *Meridian Sun*, chuse to entertain it self with the abatements of corrected and reflected Light, and take up with the *feebler* refreshments of lesser Beauties for a while, till at length the faculty

ty grows more confirm'd, and dares encounter the Sun in his Strength. And these are the *Steps* of the *Sanctuary*. So that *Platonic Love* is the Love of Beauty abstracted from all sensual Applications, and desire of corporal contract, as it leads us on to the Love of the first original Beauty, God; or more plainly thus, The Ascent of the Soul to the Love of the *Divine* Beauty, by the Love of *abstracted* Beauty in Bodies. This Love of abstracted Beauty in Bodies he calls Ἐρως οὐρανίου, *Celestial Love*, in opposition to that which he calls ἐπιθυμία, which is the same with that Passion commonly signifi'd by the name of Love, (*viz.*) a desire of corporal contact arising from the sight of Beauty. This last indeed is a very vile, brutish, unmanly affection, and such as considering the vileness of our Bodies, one would think a man could never be charm'd into without the *Magic* of a *Love-potion*. But the former is an Angelical Affection, for certainly Beauty is a Divine thing; It is (as the Platonic Author says of Wisdom) *the pure Influence flowing from the Glory of the Almighty, and the Brightness of the Everlasting Light*: or in Plato's own Words, *A Ray of God*. And therefore the Love of abstract Beauty must needs be a very
gene-

generous and divine Affection. Sir, I could be more large in my account, but I consider *what 'tis* I write, and to *whom*, and therefore I think it high time to remit you to your own Thoughts, some of which I hope will be, that *I am in a very eminent degree of Friendship,*

Yours

*From my Study in
All-Souls Colledge.*

J. Norris.

FINIS.

Advertisement of the Authour.

WHEREAS it has been given out by several, and is by many still believed, that a certain Book intituled *Hæc Et Hic*, was written by me, I do here publickly disown it. And to those that will not take my word for it, I have this only farther to say, that if they are *tolerable* Judges of Sense, or have any thing of *taste* in distinguishing Stiles, they will find upon Comparison, that there is not a Line in that Book like any *Composition* of mine. But if not, their good Opinion will be *over-bought* at the *Expence* of a *Postscript*.

E R R A T A.

PAGE 29. for *decipere* read *desipere*. Pag. 30. for *quantum* read *quantum*. Pag. 31. for *quot* read *quod*. Pag. 32. for *janique* read *jamque*. *ibid.* for *Corde* read *Corda*. Pag. 45. for *learn'd* read *learn't*. Pag. 46. for *learn'd* read *learn't*.

Books set forth by the Author of these Poems
and Discourses. viz.

1. **E**FFIGIES *Amoris*, or the Pi-
cture of Love unveil'd, in En-
glish, twelves.

2. A Meditation of Life and Death,
out of the learned *Eusebius*, in English,
octavo.

3. *Hierocles* upon the Golden Ver-
ses of the *Pythagoreans*, in English, octa-
vo.

4. A Tract against the absolute De-
cree of Reprobation, Latin, octavo.